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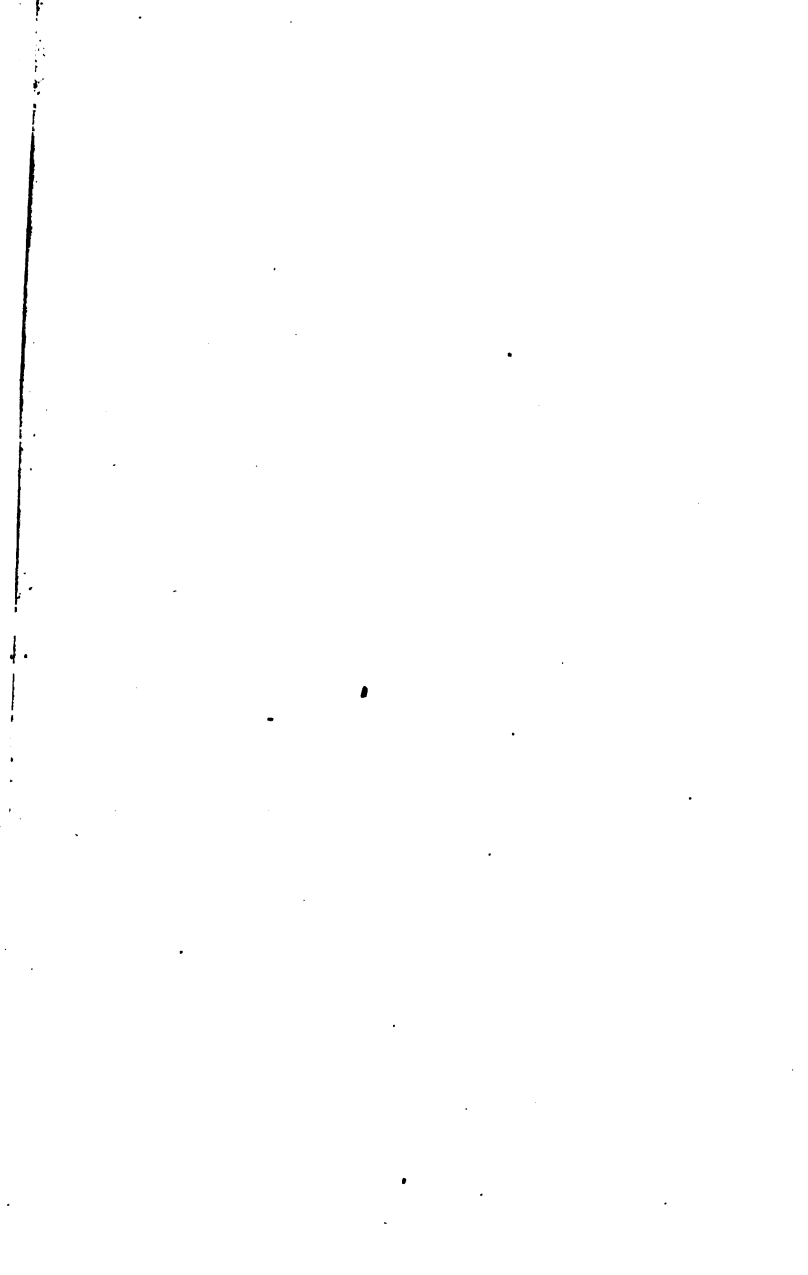
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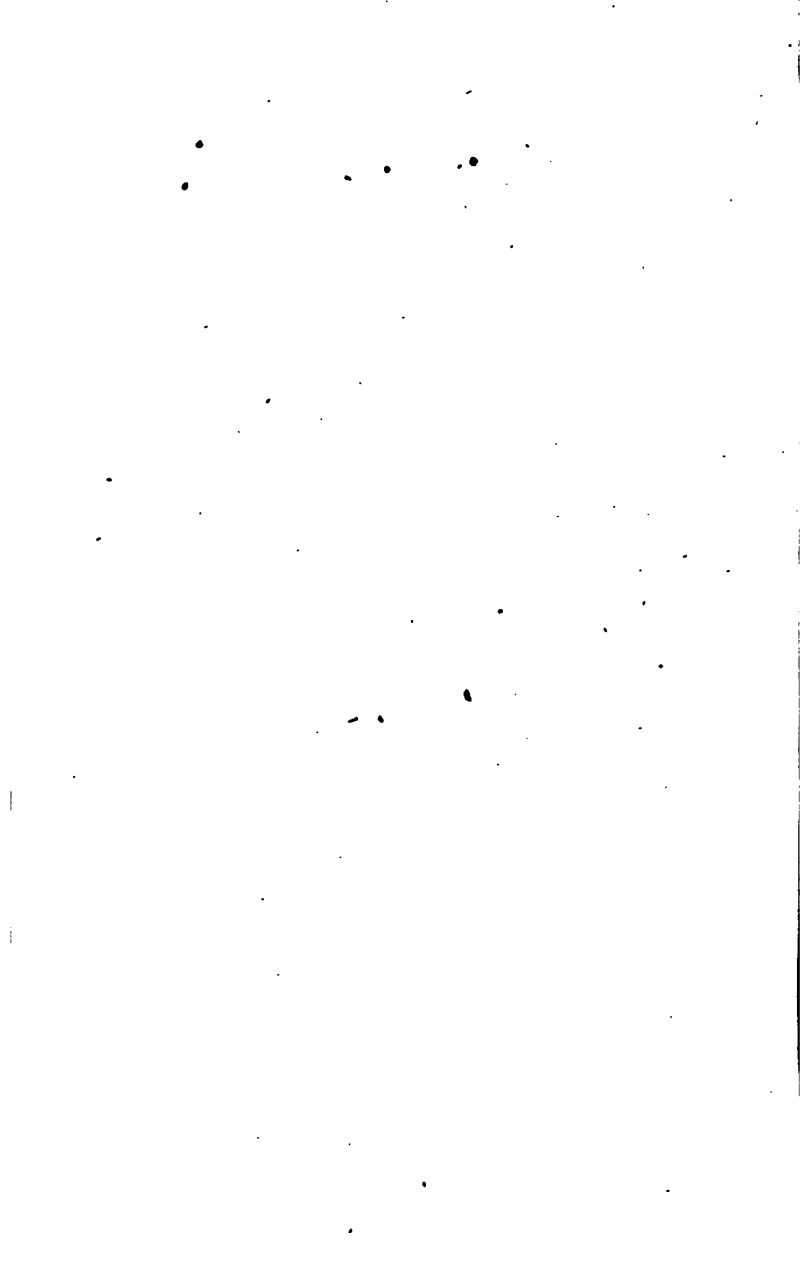


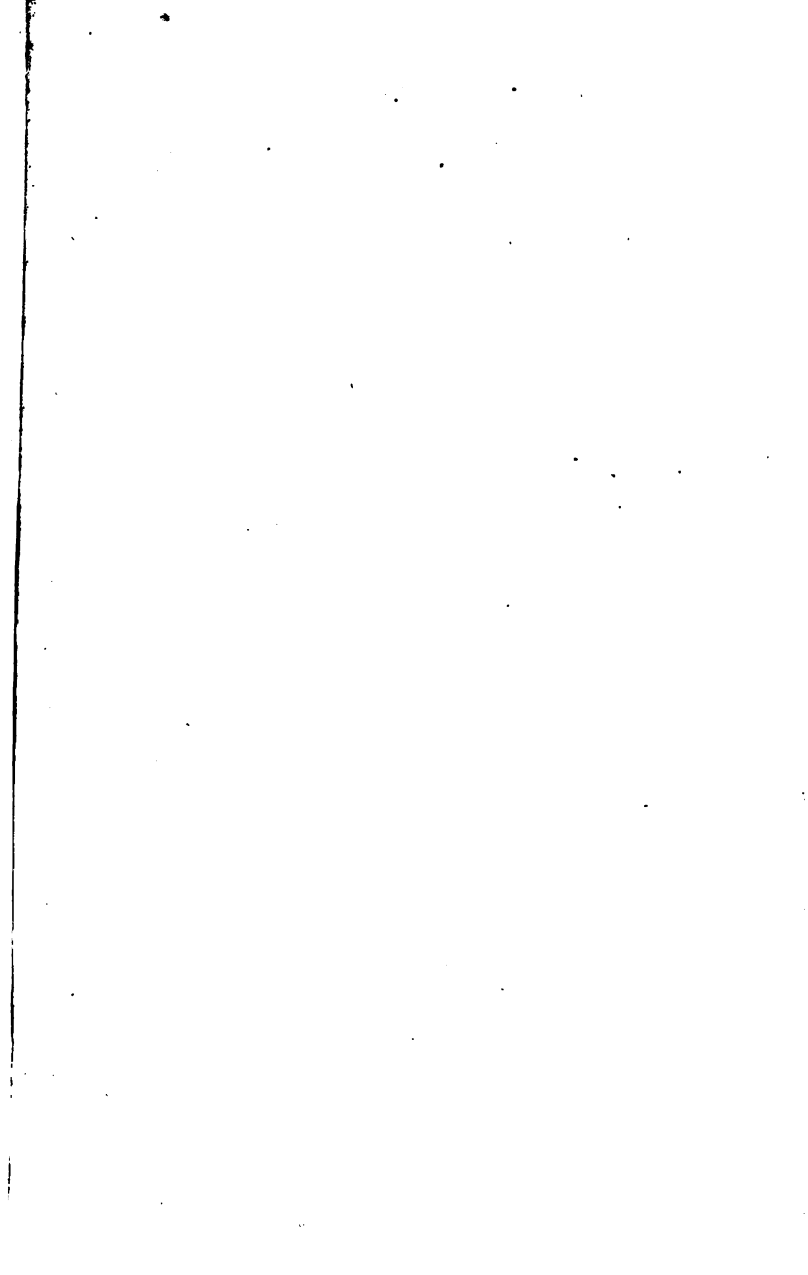
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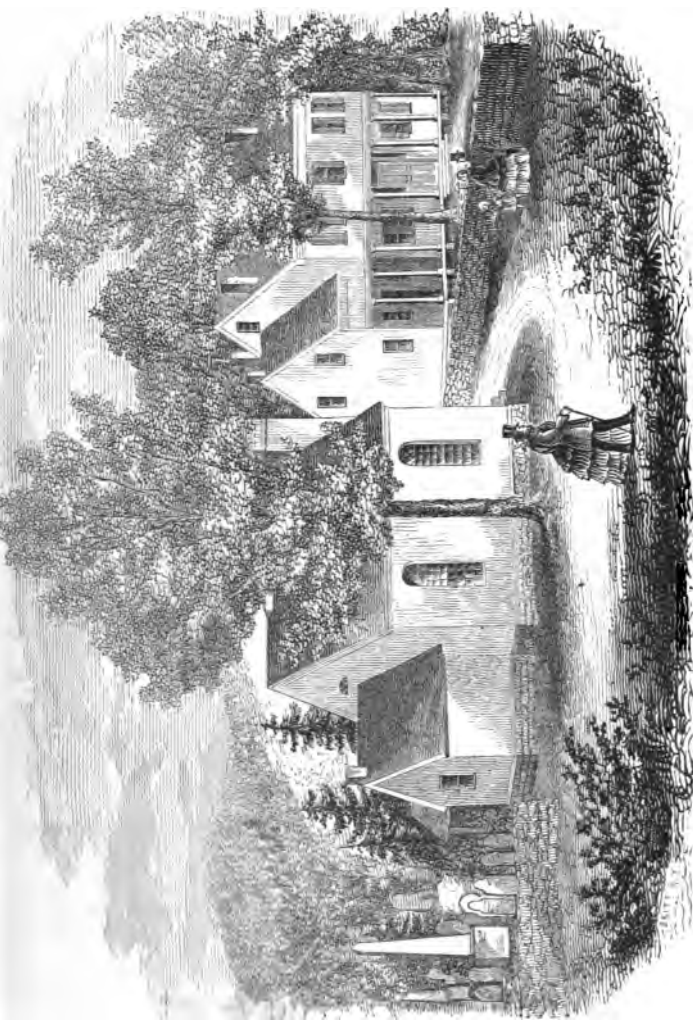
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ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, BEDFORD, N. Y.—SEE PAGES 16 AND 17, AND 22 AND 23.

FRAGMENTS

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THE STUDY OF A PASTOR.

BY

J. A. GEORGE W. NICHOLS, A. M.

NEW YORK:

ED. BY B. PRICE, PUBLISHER, 881 BROADWAY.

1863



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FRAGMENTS

FROM

THE STUDY OF A PASTOR.

BY *Warner*
REV. GEORGE W. NICHOLS, A. M.

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TO MY FATHER,

Rev. Samuel Nichols,

WHO FOR TWENTY-TWO YEARS WAS THE FAITHFUL PASTOR OF THE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH AT BEDFORD, N. Y., MY BEST EARTHLY FRIEND
AND COUNSELLOR; AND

TO MY BROTHER,

William H. Nichols, Esq.,

OF NEW YORK.

THE GENIAL COMPANION OF MY BOYHOOD, WHOSE TREASURED WORDS OF
KINDNESS AND ENCOURAGEMENT ARE REMEMBERED AS THE BRIGHT
BEAMS OF SUNSHINE, ILLUMING THE PATHWAY OF LIFE'S
LATER YEARS, THESE PAGES ARE MOST GRATEFULLY
AND AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY THE

AUTHOR.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., FEB. 14, 1860.

The Author's Preface.

MANY of the religious narratives and sketches contained in the present volume have already appeared in print. Several of them have been enlarged and improved, and others are entirely new, and are now, for the first time, presented to the public. The narratives of individual history and religious character here set forth are all true, and are delineated just as they appeared to the writer's observation, without any of that high coloring and embellishment of rhetoric which belongs to religious fiction. As true and faithful records of Christian character and experience, the Author hopes they may prove not only interesting but profitable. It is his most devout wish and earnest prayer that the Divine blessing may accompany them.

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I.

A Visit to and Ramble about my Father's Parsonage.

WRITTEN IN 1836.

TO one who roams over the expanse of nature with the design of adding somewhat to his store of intellectual and moral worth, there belongs a substantial joy, which is known only to him who has experienced it. Man, the noblest work of the Deity's creation, has not been endowed with those exalted powers of mind, and those constraining motives to high moral action, without at the same time being furnished with the most ample means of training himself for a holy and a sublime career of glory in a future world. The Author of our being, in his wisdom, has cast our lot in a land where the light

of truth, religious as well as intellectual, shines forth in the fullest splendor. His hand guided the helm of that gallant vessel which bore our Pilgrim Fathers to these shores. No military power could stop the sacred current of that flow of patriotism, which diffused itself through the American breast; and finally, though often baffled by the storms of adversity, achieved the independence of these United States. Since that memorable event, still guided by a benificent Heaven, our country has gone onward, till now she stands before the world an enviable model of both moral and mental greatness. The mind of the Christian student, here developing itself among the choicest discoveries of science and art, meets with no barrier in its progress to full maturity. Every means of supplying strength and vigor to its faculties, of imparting dignity and elevation to its moral powers, seems to be sedulously and faithfully employed, if we except one, which we fear is too often neglected by the American student. By this, we intend the study of our own scenery.

And what, it may justly be asked, is the reason of such neglect? Our majestic rivers and beautiful plains, and the innumerable varieties of hill and valley, which run through the length and breadth of our land, certainly do not fall into the shade before those of any other country in the world. Perhaps we have not the softness of the German landscape, or the bold and picturesque scenery of the Alps, or the elegance and artificial display of the English Park; yet, have we not a Niagara, whose sublime cataract far eclipses anything of the kind in the Old World? Have we not, also, the far West, irrigated by that noble sheet of water, the Mississippi, winding its way through a portion of country as romantic and beautiful as human eye ever rested upon? Amid so inviting a field of mental and moral culture as that which our country presents, is it not, then, a most just remark, with which we began this sketch, that to the careful student of Nature there belongs a pure and substantial joy? But I must beg the pardon of my reader for

digressing thus far, and hasten to my subject.

It was on a fine sunny morning in July, 1836, that I left the noise and unpleasant atmosphere of the city, for the purpose of visiting the home of my childhood.

A few moments' walk soon brought me on board one of the numerous steamboats which lie scattered over the Hudson, presenting to the beholder a scene of interest and variety, perhaps unequaled in the world. None but one who has been confined to the heat and dust of a crowded city, during the summer season, can adequately conceive the delightful and reviving sensations, arising from an excursion upon this noble river. To me the scene was full of interest and pleasure, not only from the many diversified and beautiful objects which rose to my view on every hand, but also from the fact that I should ere long be in my Father's Parsonage.

On our right, the banks sloped down beautifully, quite to the water's edge, while in the

back-ground the eye rested alternately upon woods and fields, smiling with verdure of the richest green, and exhibiting in all respects a picture such as Nature's inimitable pencil only can draw. Here and there, as we passed along, might be noticed a neat little cottage, with its beautiful garden in the rear, and a grove of trees and shrubs in front. The sight of these objects awakened in my mind a train of interesting reflections. I could not but think how much the Creator, acting through his works, had done to beautify and adorn these residences! What an air of neatness and comfort has he thrown around them! But then, the momentous question arises, do any of these immortal souls ever think of the goodness and benevolence of God, in thus adorning their earthly habitations? And does this thought direct their hopes and expectations to that upper country, where

——“Everlasting spring abides,
And never fading flowers.”

Does the voice of prayer and praise ever rise

from any family altar, which has here been erected for the all-important purpose of obtaining and perpetuating the blessings of redeeming love? Does each returning Sabbath bear witness to the visits of these family circles, so happily situated here on earth, at the church of God; and there, are their voices to be heard joining in the grand chorus of sacred melody which ascends weekly from the lips of God's people? Such were the inquiries which successively suggested themselves to my mind. Oh! how important it is that they should be answered in the affirmative.

On our left hand the river was enclosed by those almost perpendicular piles of rock, which rise to an immense height for many miles along the river. In connection with the scenery just described, they form a striking and interesting combination. Here the mind seems to pause with a solemn awe and stillness, as it contemplates these monuments of the sublimity and grandeur of God's works; while there it is ready to break forth into heartfelt expressions

of wonder and delight, at the evidences of their infinite skill and perfection. Well may we exclaim, how much is there around, above and beneath us to call forth our highest gratitude and love! What language can paint the character of him who remains unmoved amid the combination of passing wonders—the beautiful, the sublime, the grand and the awful—all which, surrounding him on every side, speak forth continually in tones of heaven-born eloquence, the power and skill of their great Creator! Had any portion of the scenery which lay spread out before me, received a different appropriation, the landscape would have been defective—the harmony lost, and one valuable evidence of the character of the Supreme Being would have been hidden from our sight. It is a most satisfactory and consoling truth that God has left nothing in his works to contravene that unison of holy attributes which form the Divine character.

Occupied by these, and such like reflections, I soon arrived at the Parsonage. It was a

neat wooden building, so thickly embosomed in the green foliage of numerous pretty trees as to be almost hid from sight.

On one side stood the parish church, around which age had thrown something like a venerable air. The surface of an adjoining field was strewed over with white marble tablets, reminding the observer that here lay the dark and silent regions of the dead. This was a spot which I had often visited in the days of childhood, with my affectionate and pious mother. How many a Sabbath day's close has found us walking together among these tombs, and reading over their impressive records; and that, too, alas! without awakening in my mind one anxious thought as to the great interests of eternity.

Why might not these have been the last admonitions which I should ever receive? Oh! how transient is the life of man! and with what eagerness and decision should we seek to save that immortal spirit, which is so soon to leave its clay tenement, and to dwell forever

either amidst the celestial glories of Heaven, or in the gloomy regions of unutterable, eternal despair!

“These transient scenes will soon be o’er,
They fade upon the sight,
And quickly will their brightest day
Be lost in endless night!
Oh! could our thoughts and wishes fly
Above these gloomy shades,
To those bright worlds, beyond the sky,
Which sorrow ne’er invades;
There joys unseen by mortal eyes,
Or reason’s feeble ray,
In ever-blooming prospects rise,
Unconscious of decay.”

At the distance of about an hour’s walk from the Parsonage, there rises to view a lofty mountain, which forms a bold and picturesque object amid the surrounding scenery. A stroll upon this mountain affords a most pleasant exercise for a summer’s afternoon. It was about the close of day that I bent my steps in this direction. As I passed through the Parsonage-grounds, it was peculiarly gratifying to observe the air of neatness and plenty

which they exhibited. The reflection insensibly occurred to my mind, how happy must be that Christian Pastor, who possesses a quiet and pleasant residence in the country, with his church, the object of his love and solicitude, ever under his eye, and his beloved flock around him. The sun had just set behind the Western hills, leaving behind a flood of light and glory, which shone with peculiar brilliancy through the green foliage of the intervening hills. The season was a delightful one for calm and serious reflection. I passed silently on, and soon arrived at the banks of a favorite stream, in whose waters I had often sported with my younger brother. It seemed as if I were listening to the same playful sounds of waters which had so frequently caught my ear before. I was most significantly reminded of that beautiful passage of David, in which he speaks of a Christian's peace as flowing like a river. How strong is the motive which should urge every one to seek for this peace—a peace which passeth all under-

standing, and which will never cease to flow in one uninterrupted channel of love and happiness over the Christian soul! By this time the peak of the mountain was almost gained. It still bore the name which had been originally impressed upon it by that down-trodden yet noble race, the American Indians. I could not but ask the question as I walked on, "*Where* are they *now*?" and, alas! the echo, reverberating from a hundred hills, answered impressively, "*Where* are they *now*?" Most of them have entered upon the untried scenes of eternity, while many, it may be said with truth, have been driven to the extremities of the earth. The ashes of their fathers repose in some distant land,—some of them, perhaps, beneath the very spot on which I am now standing,—and what is most melancholy, scarce a single beam of light from the glorious gospel of Christ shines in upon that dark and gloomy wilderness, over which they now roam. Some few, I rejoice to say, have made noble sacrifices in their behalf. The names of Brainard

and Elliott are already enshrined in the hearts of millions of the friends of man, and in Heaven they will continue to shine forth with a purity and splendor like the stars, forever and ever.

Finding an elevated rock upon the summit, I sat down upon it, in order to rest myself from the fatigue of my journey, and view the prospect before me. Oh! what a scene! Such grandeur, beauty and magnificence as were here combined, might well invite the pen of an angel. How weak is human language, in attempting to describe the works of the great and eternal God. Below me slept a quiet vale, which extended itself for many miles. As the eye passed admiringly over it, there might be seen the church and Parsonage, before described, looking out from a bed of green trees, as if to invite all the surrounding inhabitants to come and taste the rich treasures of divine grace, there dispensed through its word and ordinances. I could almost imagine, as I sat gazing upon it, sounds

of heavenly melody were falling upon my ear, accompanied with those beautiful lines:—

“ The spirit in our heart
Is whispering, sinner, come ;
The bride, the church of Christ, proclaims
To all his children, come !
Yes, whosoever will,
Oh ! let him freely come,
And freely drink the stream of life ;
’Tis Jesus bids him come.”

Many miles beyond the vale lay Long Island Sound, spread out as some vast mirror, dotted here and there with the canvas of numerous vessels, and bounded on the farther side by banks of sand. The blue hills, enveloped in smoke, quietly reposed beyond them, like a sleeping infant in the arms of its mother. Far off towards the east might be seen the peaks of the Highlands, forming a blue line, stretching along the horizon for many miles, and capped by the overhanging clouds. I walked round upon the opposite side of the mountain, not a great way off from its base, I could see in the distance the family mansion

of an illustrious patriot of the Revolution. To this quiet and happy retreat he had retired to spend the evening of his days, after having borne a noble part in framing and molding together this now great and growing republic. The two great motives by which he was ever actuated, were the honor of God and the good of his fellow-men. Oh! that the patriot would always thus embody the Christian in one harmonious and perfect whole.

After a short walk, I soon descended the mountain and hastened back to the Parsonage.

The above sketch was written about twenty-three years ago, while the writer was a member of the General Episcopal Theological Seminary, in the city of New York. The author's later impressions of the same scenes, written in 1859, will be found in the following:

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD.

The sweet recollections of childhood are seldom forgotten. How we love to recall

them as they lie pictured with life-like freshness on the canvass of our memory! With what tenacity do they cling to us as we stretch farther and farther on in life's journey! Time, though it seems to obliterate often the scenes and events of later years, yet seldom can efface from our remembrance the early impressions of our childhood, and the influence of our early home. As memory sometimes wanders back through the shadowy vista of by-gone years, the writer's thoughts frequently recur back to these scenes of early life. In the following brief sketch, it will be his aim to bring before the mind of the reader, a few brief reminiscences, which he hopes will not be without interest and profit. The early years of life, to which allusion is made, were passed under the parental roof, in the Parsonage of St. Matthew's Church, in the quiet village of Bedford, in the south part of the State of New York. How many sweet memories, how many fond recollections, cluster around that quiet old parsonage! It was *there*

that the young mind received its first impressions of truth and moral beauty. It was *there* that the young affections were trained and linked by the tender associations of home, brother, sister, mother and father. Oh! what a period is that of youth! The first instructions and influences of home generally decide what is to be the great governing principle of life. What a blessing it is to have Christian parents; to be reared and educated under their watchful eye! Could we lift the curtain that hides the future from our sight, we should see that the destiny of the young is mostly shaped by the plastic hand of the mother. I often think how different might have been the future course of its inmates, had their lot been cast elsewhere than in that Parsonage.

How well do I remember that old Parsonage, with its green lawn in front, overshadowed by the trees, which were planted there by the hand of the Rector, and then the venerable church which stood beside it; and the numerous white marble monuments which lay

around it, covering the sleeping dust of those who were once animated with life. In the summer season, how often have I gazed, with a feeling of indescribable pleasure, upon this my youthful home, and upon all the surrounding objects then so familiar to my eyes! Here you might behold the rich, sunny fields of grass, and fragrant clover; and there the golden fields of grain, waving gently beneath the soft summer breezes. Behind the parsonage, a lofty mountain towered gracefully up, which afforded a lovely view of the lowland beneath, where lay the church and parsonage, the school-house, and other dwellings that occupied the neighborhood; while afar off in the distance might be seen the mountains rising one above another until their summits mingled with the skies. How often have I climbed that mountain, and looked down with delight on all these scenes, so dear to the heart of childhood! the home of my boyhood—the church where I was taught to love and worship the blessed Saviour!—And then how often have I hastened towards

my home, following a circuitous pathway, which led down the mountain, stopping to rest awhile upon the green bank of a stream, which went murmuring along the mountain's base, affording sweet music to the ear of childhood! Among these memories of childhood, the writer can recall also many interesting associations connected with the departed members of the Jay family. The mansion of that revered and pure-minded Christian patriot, John Jay, lay about two miles north of the church. The road leading to the mansion was familiar, as I often frequented it, winding around among the hills of that diversified and picturesque country, until it led the way to that interesting spot, then the residence of that great and good man. It was a large and commodious building, beautifully located upon an elevated slope of ground, from which the eye rested upon a broad landscape of diversified scenery. After having spent the best part of his life in labors for the good of his beloved country, this distinguished and honored statesman sought this

quiet and peaceful retreat, far removed from all the turmoil and business of life ; and here he spent a serene and happy old age in the bosom of his family. John Jay, at this period, took a deep interest in the welfare and prosperity of the Episcopal Church. He was never absent from its weekly services, unless prevented by sickness, and many were the tokens of regard which the Rector received from him. Not only might you see the striking form and placid countenance of John Jay as you entered the parish church of a Sunday morning ; but there you might see likewise those devoted and Christian sisters, Mrs. Banyer and Miss Jay, whose pure lives and noble deeds of mercy and charity have been bequeathed—a rich heritage—to the Church on earth. There, too, might be seen another one—an honored son of John Jay—the late Judge William Jay, whose death occurred but recently at the same old family mansion. During his lifetime he enjoyed the well-deserved reputation of an able Advocate and learned Judge ; besides leaving

behind him several works of deserved reputation and marked ability. He died in the Christian faith, and his dust reposes now, along with others of his family, beside the old parish Church. A correspondent of a New York paper has given so graphic and interesting an account of the funeral of Judge Jay, that the writer cannot forbear, in this connection, to make the following extracts:—

“On Sunday last, all that was mortal of Judge Jay, of Bedford, was committed to the grave, in the churchyard of St. Matthew’s Church, near the village of Bedford. * * * * The relatives of the family gathered together at the old family mansion, where the departed man had so long presided, and where his father before him had retired from the cares of State to prepare for another world. As the hour for the ordinary services of the Sabbath approached, the long procession moved away with the body toward the Church of which he had been for many years a member. Neighbors and friends joined in to lengthen the line. Old servants,

white with years, and poor folk who had many a time shared the sympathy and the bounty of the old Judge, waited under the trees and followed in the procession to do their last reverence to the head of

‘The good house,
That loved the people well.’

There were none in Westchester County, on that Sabbath day, that were not aware who had passed away, and all, by their silent presence or their private grief, expressed their respect for the dead. Farm wagons waited on the roads that joined the way to the church, and stood till the procession passed, to fall in the line of march. There were old men who had known the Governor, and had pleasant memories of his greatness; men that had played with the Judge, and measured the nearness of their own death by his departure; children that had shared his ready smile; negroes he had succored and taught, and they all followed the hearse. The rolling country that lies between the Jay-house and the little Epis-

copal Church, where the family worships, was clothed in the richness of autumn. Maple, sumac, hickory and oak, were all tinted and scarlet, yellow and brown, and their leaves fell under the warm sun like snow on the orchards and the roads, and the homely churchyard half filled with old graves. The autumn day was hazy with purple dust, and all along the hills the shocks of corn, like the good man, fully ripe, were garnered home. At the church, the services were conducted by the Rector, the Rev. Edward B. Boggs, assisted by Dr. McVickar, of New York, a near relative of the deceased, and Mr. Partridge, a former Pastor. The sermon was properly in keeping with the circumstance. It gave no eulogium of the dead, nor recounted any of his deeds or those of his ancestors. It merely held up his Christian virtues as the lustre and example of his life, and enforced the great truth of the text that Judge Jay died in repeating, and ordered carved on his tombstone, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." * * * *

“The burial-ground, where the body was placed lies directly adjoining the church, which is situated about a mile from the village of Bedford. Here lie, waiting their final summons, many members of the family who have gone before, their tombstones shaded by the ancient trees that have grown around the close and in the parsonage-yard. The grave of the Judge was placed by the side of his wife, who had been awaiting him at the trysting-place one year, and amid his kindred who are sleeping in the hope of the great resurrection. The parish of St. Matthew is one of the most ancient in the State, and was organised in the year 1694. It seems a pleasant place, with its quaint buildings, its venerable trees, and sculptured texts, preaching to the living, and now it has another grave that tells to its survivors, in mute language, the true dignity of life in this world and the way of life to the world that is to come.”

As we thus recall these memories of other days, a shade of melancholy is thrown over the

picture of the past. We look back in vain to behold the countenances of those whom we once loved and admired.

How changed is the scene! Other and strange faces now occupy the places with which we were once familiar. Other feet tread the parsonage in which we lived.

“ ’Tis sad to see the wonted seat of friend
Removed by death ; and sad to visit scenes,
When old, where, in the smiling morn of life,
Lived many who both knew and loved us much ;
And they all gone—dead, or dispersed abroad,
And stranger-faces seen among their hills.”

In view of the departure of such as we have just been speaking of, we may well take consolation, however, and say in the words of that beautiful poet :

“ Oh ! though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only,
Such as these have lived and died.”

II.

Thoughts on Astronomy.

SO numerous and successful have been the labors of distinguished men in this department of science, that it now presents a field of inquiry as broad and extensive as it is truly delightful. The name of Newton will ever be revered by posterity as being intimately associated with one of the noblest achievements brought about by man. By its aid Astronomers have been able to investigate (we may say) the laws of universal nature. The periods in which all the bodies belonging to our solar system perform their several revolutions, and the dimensions of their orbits, have been determined with an exactness of which it may be said that perfection itself could offer no improvement. Nay more ;

we are now authorised in introducing the law of universal gravitation among the fixed stars. Double stars, or such as to the naked eye appear single, but when brought into the field of view of a powerful telescope, are resolved into two, three, and sometimes four separate stars, have been found to have revolutions occupying the swiftest of them a period of forty years; the tardiest about twelve hundred. The immense consequences that must hang upon the discovery of this fact, time only can develop in their full extent. Still the conviction seems very strong, if we may reason from the analogies of the solar system, and what is already known in regard to the fixed stars, that the influence of gravitation extends also to other systems: in short, that it constitutes the one grand vinculum that binds the whole together. If we admit that the sun of our system has a progressive motion in space, (a fact which seems highly probable, though not yet certified) we are then driven to the conclusion that it must have some fixed centre about which to perform

its revolutions. Around that centre we must suppose all the other suns which we see spread out over the starry sphere to revolve also. What that centre may be it is impossible for us to know with our present limited faculties. The sainted Dick, who no doubt reviewed this subject in the true spirit of a Christian philosopher, has supposed that it might be that spot in the universe which upholds the immoveable throne of God. If this be true, it may be permitted some of us, in a future existence, to comprehend the glorious machinery of the heavenly luminaries. Then, with our more delicate organs, we may see for ourselves what constitutes the melody of the spheres.

Not only Newton, but the name also of Herschel, likewise deserves a high place on the records of scientific achievement. Endowed by nature with the greatest powers of observation of any person that ever lived, and aided with superior advantages afforded by the use of his forty feet telescope, he has been enabled to

communicate results to the world which have greatly enlarged the empire of astronomical science, and upon which posterity will rear higher and higher the noble superstructure. Many more men of powerful genius, who have appeared foremost in this march of discovery, might be enumerated; such as, for instance, Gallileo, without whose invention the powers of a Herschel had been of no avail, and Kepler, without whose laws of motion the world had still remained ignorant of the most ordinary phenomena of the heavenly movements. But sufficient has already been said to illustrate the truth of the remark with which we set out, viz., that Astronomy now presents a field of inquiry as wide as it is pleasing. It presents to us one connected system, bearing the impress of truth in all its parts, such as no sophistry or theorizing can possibly overthrow. The student of this beautiful and interesting science can see for himself the sublime results offered to his notice, and the Christian may study the wonderful works of the Creator through this medium.

Let us now look for a few moments at one single result of this science—the *evidence which goes to show that the planets are inhabited*, and then conclude our essay with the demonstration of the truth, that *this science furnishes an excellent medium through which we may become acquainted with the infinite perfection of the Deity.*

Are the planets inhabited?

This question has called forth much extravagant speculation; and many philosophers, seduced by the splendors of their imaginations, have not hesitated to overstep the bounds of truth and reason. With all such the philosophy of Newton is at utter variance. That master-mind, whose name will never cease to awaken the highest expression of gratitude and veneration in the breast of every true lover of science, always bore in mind that there was an impassable barrier between the frail intellect of man and the dominions of the universe. Amid all the boundlessness of that mighty empire that lay spread out before him,

amid all the grandeur and sublimity of those themes which constantly engrossed his attention, his philosophic eye never lost sight of that barrier; but in the naked simplicity of truth, and with the Bible in his hand, he began his glorious career, commencing from the most simple operations of nature around him, until he finally arrived at that greatest of all intellectual triumphs—the discovery of the law of universal gravitation. Happy would it be for the cause of religion, as well as philosophy, if scientific men of the present day would always follow the example of that noble-minded man.

Bearing this suggestion in mind, we may now properly proceed to offer to the reader's consideration a few reasons, explanatory of our belief that the planets are inhabited; and,

1. *From analogy*, we might reasonably suppose this to be the fact.

Looking round upon our globe, we perceive it is everywhere stocked with innumerable forms of animated existence. From the invis-

ible animalculæ, revealed only by the powers of the microscope, to the elephant and rhinoceros, (man not excepted) there is a countless number of different individuals, all living out their allotted term of existence upon the surface of our world. Hence, on the ground of analogy, we naturally conclude that those other orbs, which accompany us through the regions of space, must also have been designed by the Creator as the abodes of various beings like our own. We cannot believe that while this little spot in the boundless extent of the universe, is so thickly crowded with life and animation in different forms, the inconceivably wide dominions of God's creation around us, should be left a mere solitary waste; that those unnumbered stars, which twinkle in silver brightness over our heads, should have been made as mere ornaments to beautify this tiny sphere.

2. The same position may be argued still farther, from the *wisdom of the Creator*. What individual, who has for once cast an attentive

eye upon the wide field of nature, as she exists in her thousand varied forms and operations around him, has not been convinced that the Creator makes nothing in vain? Look where we will, life and action are multiplied in the ocean's depths, as well as upon and beneath the surface of the earth. We behold a verdant landscape, and acknowledge its beauty to be the work of an Almighty hand. But how much is our admiration and wonder increased, on taking a minuter survey than the eye of itself is capable of affording! The attempt to enumerate the millions upon millions of living beings which unveil themselves to our view, is utterly vain. Nor is this all. We find that each of these animals has its own sphere of action on the great theatre of life—that none have been created in vain. Man stands highest in the rank. Upon him the Creator has lavished his noblest gifts. To him he has communicated a portion of his own divine essence; and not only has he allotted him a career of earthly existence, but he has

also placed within his reach the means of arriving at a far higher and nobler sphere of action—a sphere in which, clad in the robes of unsullied purity, he will forever sing the praises of his God.

3. In addition to what has already been said, it may be observed that there are special contrivances in the planets which adapt them for the abodes of sentient beings. Each has a revolution upon its own axis, to furnish the regular succession of day and night. Many of them are accompanied by satellites, to give light by night. They also revolve about the sun, in common with our earth, from west to east. That such regulations exist in all, cannot certainly have been the result of chance. No man, in view of reason and common sense, can pretend for a moment to maintain so unreasonable a doctrine. If then we acknowledge it (as we most certainly must) to be the work of a divine agent, and if we also compare attentively our own planet with the rest of the solar system, (so far as our knowledge

extends) the idea cannot fail to strike us forcibly, that the Being who first set them in motion, also peopled them with myriads of intelligent and immortal existences, like ourselves. Such is the evidence upon which this question rests. No facts have indeed ever come to light, capable of effecting its final solution. No winged messenger of light has come to us to announce the interesting tidings. This should remind us of our own insignificance, and teach the greatness of God.

This brings me finally to dwell upon the last proposition, *that the science of Astronomy furnishes an excellent medium, through which we may become acquainted with the infinite perfections of Deity.*

The Christian mind, which by long and careful reflection, has made itself master of its doctrines, needs no more powerful object of thought to remind him of the glorious, omniscient attributes of God, than is to be found here. He looks upon the wide expanse that surrounds him, and floats above his head, as a

most wonderful exhibition of the power of the Almighty. His eye moves on from system to system—from the full orbéd planets, riding in majesty with their splendid retinue of satellites, to the dense clusters of stars that compose the *nebulæ*. Here his telescope refuses to conduct him further into the regions of space, and he is lost in the infinitude of worlds that figure in the boundless expanse before him. He wonders that man, a mere worm of the dust, on this speck of God's creation, should dare to rebel against his maker. When his mind is directed to the manner in which the movements of all the heavenly bodies is perpetuated from age to age, his emotions are heightened still more.

Before, the stars had appeared like white silver balls, strung all over the blue arch, rivaling in splendor and beauty the most exquisite works of art; but now, his thoughts are turned to that mysterious power, which can uphold such immense bodies, and always maintain them in their wonted spheres. Here is a

thought worthy his highest admiration—his choicest reflections—millions upon millions of worlds scattered through the universe, and yet all of them moving on in their accustomed paths, without even the slightest disturbance. When, instead of each of these bodies being supported by a direct influence from their framer, as he before imagined, he comes now to find that, in all probability, one simple force, originally emanating from the will of Deity, reigns throughout the whole, and that the centrifugal force imparted to each body when first it was launched into space, in connection with its influence, operates to produce all the uniformity and exactness which he beholds, immediately all his doubts vanish, and he is then fully prepared to comprehend the phenomena of that system, which previously appeared inexplicable. And in the fact that the equilibrium of these motions is the result of the joint influences of gravity and the centrifugal force, he realises a more decisive and impressive proof of the infinite skill of the Almighty, than if a direct

power were to be extended from his hand upon each body. It is a fact, which successive investigations tend to confirm, still more and more, that all the works of God are characterized by simplicity of means. Not only does this appear from the researches already made in chemical and physical science, but Astronomy also teaches the same great truth, where the operations of the Deity are carried on upon a much larger scale. We see then how strikingly and wonderfully the infinite perfections of Deity are made to appear, the more we study this interesting subject.

III.

Elevating Moral Tendency of the Study of the Works of Nature.

THAT man was not placed here in this beautiful world, without some ostensible claims to a moral existence is evident, not only from the whole tenor of the sacred volume, but also by every exalted moral feeling which either the intellectual or moral world may be calculated to inspire. The consciousness that exists within us of those sublime and mysterious moral attributes which come only from God, are sufficient to excite some transient apprehensions, if not permanent convictions, of the reality of that spiritual life which exists in the soul. But if, while under the influence of this consciousness, and with the Bible in our hand, we walk among the creations of Nature, and there examine by her light, and that of

revealed truth, our individual claims to a moral state of being, how powerful are the convictions which must inevitably steal into our hearts. The truth becomes overwhelming, and cannot be resisted.

The farther our eye ranges over this vast panorama, and the more critically we examine its varied constitutions, the more we learn of God's glorious purposes towards his creatures;—purposes calculated to impress upon the heart a never-dying sense of man's moral accountability, as well as the urgency of those motives that should lead him to holiness of life.

1. We remark, then, in the first place, that the tendency of a serious contemplation of the works of Nature, is *to elevate (morally) and enlarge the soul.*

By this we mean that every true Christian will have the tone of his moral feelings raised, and will enjoy more delightful conceptions of the character and requirements of his Creator—if, with a meditative mind, firmly bent on fulfill-

ing the great ends of its being, he permits his thoughts to concentrate themselves on the works of the Deity, as presented in the world around him.

Looking abroad upon the wide expanse of Nature, the Christian cannot distinguish a single object, be it ever so imposing or humble, which does not reflect the glory of him who formed them.

At one time he beholds it clothed in drapery of the richest green—its verdant soil, diversified by numberless varieties of flowers and plants—its towering and picturesque mountains rising here and there to relieve the prospect, and spread health and joy over every land. He sees, too, the sublime and awful in nature, displayed in no less striking and powerful combinations.

The Alps of the Old World, so often and so beautifully described by the Christian traveler, as he has climbed the rugged height, or suddenly darted down in sight of some Alpine cottage, have no doubt often impressed the

heart of the attentive reader with feelings of pleasing melancholy and awe. The roar of the distant cataract, occasioned by the ceaseless roll of foaming sheets of water over their rocky bed, force from the bystander conceptions of sublimity and grandeur, which can alone find solution in the character of nature's God. How different do these objects appear to the eye of such an one, and to a mere moral nature, unrenewed by the light of eternal truth! With the latter they elicit merely that glow of natural feeling which is common to the whole human race. But with the former they serve to promote that expansive and moral growth of the soul which assimilates man to his Maker.

The perfect appropriation of the works of Nature, and the convincing evidence which they afford of the benevolence, wisdom, and power of God, would lead us to suppose that they were arranged with a design far higher and nobler than that of gratifying solely our natural propensities. Indeed this is no more

than a just inference from the character of their Divine originator. Could we for once suppose that a Being possessed of an infinite nature, made up of moral attributes too glorious for our finite minds to comprehend, after having formed man in his own image, and endowed him with the strongest motives to holiness, should still have intended this beautiful world of his creation to minister nothing to his moral character, the only redeeming feature of man above the brute creation? We may also safely appeal to the experience of every Christian on this point. Some period of his life will no doubt bear witness that he is no stranger to the power of natural scenery to enlarge and elevate his soul. Cold, indeed, must be that heart which has not often been elevated to God when Nature's charms have caused it to beat high with sensations of wonder and delight. And on the other hand, who so joyful as that Christian soul that can gather from every verdant blossom or humble plant and flower, motives to spirituality of

life? Jesus loved to commune with Nature, and often appealed to the lilies of the valley, to the corn fields, and other objects of the natural world. Happy is that Christian Pastor, who, while traveling from house to house, now through the lonely woods and groves, and now among the habitations of his flock, can at every step trace more and more of God's goodness, wisdom, power, and love. No road is too lonely for a mind thus furnished with resources of its own. It holds joyful converse with the great source of all light and truth. He has learned from the Word of God to regard all things as subservient to the one great object of life—the salvation of the soul, and he therefore strives to make use of every means which may contribute to so valuable an object.

IV.

Popular Notices of Mount Washington and its Vicinity.

(FIRST PUBLISHED IN "SILLIMAN'S JOURNAL," VOL. 34, NO. 1.)

TO PROFESSOR SILLIMAN.

Bedford, N. Y., Jan. 10, 1838.

DEAR SIR,

Having made a short tour through New England, in the summer of 1836, I now send you, for the American Journal, some notices of scenery and other objects which fell under my observation, while passing through the White Mountains of New Hampshire. On Wednesday, August 17, 1836, I left Bath, a neat and enterprising village on the Amonoosuck River, for the White Mountains. The ride from this place was truly delightful; for it was beneath a clear sky, and

the scenery was agreeably and beautifully diversified. Our road lay, a part of the time, along the picturesque banks of the Ammonoosuck, and it led us also over hills and through forests of stately evergreens. The level country, which had followed us along the banks of the Connecticut, was soon exchanged for gradual undulations of a region with a barren soil, which continued to rise higher and spread wider until we reached the valley lying near the base of the mountains. A very perceptible difference in the temperature could be felt as we gradually made our way upward; and notwithstanding it was now not far from the middle of August, the scanty crops had nearly all been destroyed by the frost. Indeed, the weather was so cold that blazing fires were found at most of the inns where we stopped. The sparse population of the mountains is obliged to depend upon the neighboring country for their agricultural supplies, and all that is not consumed finds a market in Portland. Now and then, as you pass along, the eye rests

upon a little strip of cleared land composing the farm of some industrious mountaineer. There was one which peculiarly arrested our attention. It embraced, along with a few acres of ground, a small rude hut, consisting of pine logs piled one upon the other, and made tight by means of plaster. A roof of rough boards was thrown over the logs. What a contrast between this rude habitation and the splendid mansions of our cities ! Science and commerce nourish the arts ; and the arts make the difference between the mountain hut and the city palace.

The scenery, as you approach the mountain, increases in grandeur and sublimity. Vast and interminable ridges of mountains rise on all sides, one above another, until they seem to be blended with the distant horizon. The white peaks of these mountain groups, appearing as if snow-clad, tower above all other objects and hide themselves in the clouds.

On Thursday morning, August 18, our company, consisting of three persons and a guide,

left the dwelling of our host at the early hour of six. Thence we proceeded as fast as our horses could carry us through forests and over swamps and rugged steeps, by a path filled with mud, stones, and roots of trees. Arriving at some distance from the foot of the mountain, our horses were tied to trees, and thence we proceeded on foot.

The ascent was at first gradual, but soon became, in the main, exceedingly steep, and we scrambled over rocks, piled one above another, and answering for rude stairs. Nearly half of the journey from the foot of the mountain was through a pine forest, and the rest over rocks and barrens. The whole distance ascended on foot is three miles.

About half-way up I discovered a small shrub, adhering to the rocks in the manner of a vine, and named by our guide the dwarf spruce. This was the last appearance of vegetation. The summit, for the distance of half-a-mile on all sides, is composed of immense

rocks, promiscuously heaped together, while the view which it affords is beyond what the most vivid imagination can conceive. In this elevated region, soft, silky clouds may be seen floating around and beneath, and no object could be more splendidly gorgeous than one of those clouds, when illuminated by the sun. The barrenness of an unbroken winter, whose bleak winds are whistling round, reigns on all the scene.

Toward the west, north and south, it might be said of the mountains:—

“Like Alps on Alps, they rise,”

until on the east their summits mingle with the heavens. An immense valley stretches out before you, in which the Saco may be distinctly seen, wending its way to the ocean. The furrows and ruins of a number of avalanches are also visible in the sides of the mountains. These possess a melancholy interest, from the fact that one of their number, about eleven years since, borne on from the mountain top by a sudden

deluge,* swept away an entire family (nine in number) into the Saco, where their bodies were found among the earth, stones and trees—the ruins transported by the flood.

On the following day, after my return from the mountain, I stopped to view the scene of this most tragical occurrence. It lies on the public road to Portland, in a stupendous defile between the mountains, commonly called the “Notch.”

The two mountain ridges here approach very near, and there is only room for the small river Saco and a road, with a few patches of cultivated ground. The house, in which the unfortunate family resided, remains, and is now, as it was then, an inn. Those who at that time ministered to the necessities of the traveler, are now no more! It is said they ran out of the house during the night, supposing the avalanche was coming directly upon them. Had

* So violent was the friction of the descending rocks, that streaks of light, filling the air with electric odor, flashed along their paths, illuminating the palpable darkness of that dreadful night.—*Note by Ed.*

they remained in the house they would have been safe—and in emerging they ran to destruction—for at the distance of only a few yards from the dwelling, the fatal torrent overtook them, and swept them away.

The view here presented of the mountain declivities, on the right and left, is terrific in the extreme. Enormous ledges of rock hang over your head, frowning upon the traveler below.

Beautiful cascades likewise may be seen, tumbling down over these cragged steeps, and whirling in crystal eddies in the deep fountains which they have worn in the rocks. I spent some time in searching for quartz crystals, which are frequently found among the hills. They are of the brown or smoky variety, sometimes very large and beautiful, and are kept for sale at the public houses.

After traveling for some distance amid such scenery as this, I at length emerged from the region of mountains, and plunged into a wide forest, which intervenes between the

White Hills and the city of Portland—and so ended my interesting excursion to the White Mountains.

V.

Sublimity of the Missionary Work.

PROBABLY there is no portrait which presents so much for the Christian to admire as that of the devoted, self-denying Missionary of the Cross.

There is something so indescribably grand and imposing to the moral eye in the act of one who consents to resign all the social and domestic enjoyments of life, for the sake of shedding the healing influences of the gospel on heathen minds, that we cannot withhold our admiration from an enterprise at once so sublime and heavenly.

Who has not often lingered with fond delight over the biographies of such pure-minded, devoted missionaries, as Martyn, Heber, Hall,

and Neff? As we follow, in our imagination, these faithful heralds of salvation into the gloomy wilds of uncivilized men, overhung with the appalling darkness of spiritual night, how have our bosoms been made to swell with emotions of sublimity which men never felt before? Contemplate for a moment the sublime heavenly purpose of the Missionary. He leaves his native hills, the sweet home of his childhood, around which cling all the fond associations and endearments of his youth, and goes far abroad, amid Heathen and Pagan lands, to spread the glad news of Redeeming love,—to endeavor to establish in heathen minds, swayed hitherto by passion, ignorance, and gross delusion, the empire of holiness and virtue. Trace him, as he is to be seen, like the devoted Neff, now climbing those terrific heights, which exhibit Nature in her wildest and most romantic forms, and now descending amid snow and sleet, by those gorges which divide these eternal piles, in sight of some humble Alpine cottage. See him enter. Listen

to the sweet notes of prayer and praise which now break on the ear, or to the glad message which falls from the lips of the Missionary, as he proclaims the tidings of salvation to those wild and untaught heathen. Or, follow him as he penetrates the frozen snows of Iceland. See the poor Icelanders, whose heart had been before as cold as his own ice-bound hills, now melted and softened by the news of a Saviour's sacrifice, and bowed in prayer and penitence to that God who listens to all, even to the humblest and rudest penitent that speaks not in the embellishments of human rhetoric.

As you follow, thus, Christian reader, the path of a devoted missionary, as he goes forth, his heart touched with a love for his dying fellow-men, can you conceive of a spirit more worthy of your admiration? Earth's proudest heroes and mightiest conquerors can bring nothing to compare for a moment, in point of sublimity, with such a noble, God-like work as this. Search the brightest page of history, and

you will not be able to find anything capable of raising in your mind conceptions of human action so exalted and lovely. Alas! in the light of heavenly truth, what the world calls great and splendid in the character of man, is but as dust in the balance—lighter than vanity itself.

How many millions of immortal minds have been sacrificed for the purposes of ambition and pride. Let us be thankful that a brighter day is dawning upon our world. Now, more than ever before, do we behold the Christian world alive to the blessed work of missions. Unparalleled efforts are being made for the diffusion of the truth among all the various countries of the globe. The Holy Scriptures have already been translated into one hundred and forty different languages. The trammels which have impeded commerce and civilization, seem now to be broken down, and the great pathway opened to the nations; thus affording facilities for intercourse, and the diffusion of religious knowledge.

Already is there a dim, distant streak of light,

kindling up amid the darkness of Paganism. The fringe of gold is already skirting the distant mountains, betokening the dawn of a glorious morning, when the whole world shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and one united song of praise ascend from the lips of God's people. May God hasten the day, so bright—so glorious, when the benign influence of the blessed religion of Jesus shall dispel every superstition—every cruel and Pagan heathen rite—and plant, instead, the standard of the Cross. We may all, Christian reader, lend a helping hand in this good and glorious work, by our prayers, our exertions, our aid to the missionary cause. Let us labor to promote the good work with all our power and means. The Church of Christ will applaud us—our own souls will be filled with sweet satisfaction—and Christ will not fail in the great day of reckoning to reward our labors of love, for he says: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

VI.

Sketches of Travel in the Province of New Brunswick, in the year 1838.

Monday, September 4, 1838.

ON Saturday afternoon we left the city of St. John's for the purpose of making a short excursion into the country. We took one of the government roads, lying for the most part upon the banks of the Kennebacases, a branch of the St. John's river. It was just in the time of harvest. Here were long rich meadows of new-mown grass, which filled the air with fragrance—there were fields of golden grain, waving in the soft breeze. As we rode along, the scene which opened to our view was beautiful indeed. On one side rolled the smooth waters of the Kennebacases, whose banks were clothed with the rich foliage

of various evergreens; while on the other lay a fine upland, overgrown with forests, save where some "cleared" spot was to be seen ornamented with its neat white cottage. After proceeding the distance of a few hours ride, we came to the house of Mr. —, an extensive land proprietor. He is a man of most exemplary piety, and is ardently attached to the Church of England. His house lies directly upon the bank of the river, and just opposite, upon the other side, you will see the graceful spire of a neat and chaste Temple, the fruit of his pious and noble exertions. Its architecture is characterised by a beautiful simplicity and taste. There was one thing in the interior which seemed peculiarly appropriate and beautiful. It was the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, inscribed in gilt letters upon two dark tablets upon the wall, on either side of the pulpit. It was pleasing indeed to see on this spot, so little visited by the hand of human art and improvement, this neat and beautiful house of prayer.

" Oh ! 'tis sweet a home to claim
Thus where'er a church we see,
Stealing in, though not with shame,
Yet to worship noiselessly,
Like the birds to nestle there,
Where the Psalmist's cedars grow,
And to leave a fragrant prayer,
Wafting heavenward as we go.
'Tis the house of prayer—go in !
'Tis the Christian's home by right !
Find some nook—confess thy sin,
And go forth in Jesus' might."

Yesterday morning, there being no service in this church, we rode on to another in the neighboring parish of Kingston. For the space of about four miles we followed a narrow path upon the steep banks of the river. Sometimes, on casting your eye upward, you might behold huge cliffs of rock frowning upon you ; while below there would yawn a deep, fearful chasm, into which the least misstep would plunge you with instant destruction. Suddenly we came to an opening in the woods, about a mile from the river. Here the traveler sees on his right a beautiful lake, nestled among

the hills, giving a charm to the wild and romantic scenery of the neighborhood. Upon its banks may be seen two neat white cottages, one of which is the abode of a venerable and pious man who is quite an author. Close by, upon the gentle slope, are seen the parish Church and Parsonage; while in the distance, lofty mountains tower each above the other, until their summits are lost in the clouds. The Rector I found to be a man of pleasing manners and excellent character, who succeeded his father, one of the first clergymen who settled in the Province. He is assisted by his son, who together officiate in three different churches. This is the second time of our meeting with father and son associated together in the sacred and delightful employment of the Christian ministry. How sweetly, thought I, must life pass away as two of the same family are thus united in the blessed work of saving souls.

We received a kind and cordial welcome at the Parsonage. I shall not soon forget the

heart-felt interest manifested by the Rector's family in the progress of our own beloved Zion in the United States, nor the pleasure which I experienced in listening to the pleasing intelligence of the prosperity of our sister Church in a neighboring British Province. Oh! may they and we ever continue to be watered by the rich effusions of the blessed Spirit of God!

After worship, and an hour's sweet communion with these friends in a foreign land, we bade them an affectionate farewell, and returned back again to the house of our friend, Mr. —.

It was just in the evening twilight that we came again upon the borders of the river. The moon was shining with unclouded brightness, and threw her silver light with beautiful effect upon the waters. I was led unconsciously to pause, in silent admiration of the sublimity and beauty of the scene. Oh! how eloquently does Nature proclaim the glory and excellence of its great Architect!

WEDNESDAY, September 6.—This morning we returned again to the city, taking a sailboat in order to view the scenery upon the river. We passed directly under the lofty cliffs of Long Island, which here divide the river into two branches. These unite again about one mile-and-a-half below. The cliffs consist of conglomerate masses of rock and stone, having every appearance of being thrown together by fire. Deep and frightful chasms are seen above you, through which the loose rocks and stones have rolled down into the river. After winding our way among several wooded islands, with bold, rocky shores of limestone, we came in sight of Indian Town, a small village lying two miles above the city. Here the river, after a sudden bend, becomes much narrower, and a few rods below it forces its way through a narrow passage of about four hundred feet, and falls precipitately down a descent of fifteen to twenty-five feet over the rocks. The noise of the fall is heard to a great distance. Boats can safely pass only at

a certain period of the tide; otherwise they are caught upon the rocks and overturned. A very melancholy accident of this kind, we were told, had happened a little more than a week since. A pleasure-party, consisting of twenty-two in number, set sail upon a calm, still summer's afternoon, on the river. On passing over the falls, they happened to be a few moments too late; the boat, alas! struck upon the rocks, and instantly sunk! Nineteen out of the number perished, four of them being of the same family. Their bodies have not yet been found. They have, doubtless, floated down into the mighty waters of the Bay of Fundy, which here joins the fathomless ocean, and will no more be seen until the solemn morn, when "the earth and sea shall give up their dead." How true is it—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform—
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

MONDAY, September 11.—On Saturday afternoon we embarked on board the packet, "Mary Elisabeth," for the city of New York, designing to stop for a few days at Eastport, a fine, flourishing town, lying sixty miles below St. John's, on the borders of the State of Maine. As we moved slowly out of the harbor, all was life, gaiety and animation. The sailors sung merrily as they hoisted the sails to catch the prosperous breeze, while numbers of the ship's company were promenading the deck, admiring the surrounding scenery, or talking of absent friends, or watching the tall spires of the city, as they slowly receded in the distance

But how quickly was the scene changed! From gaiety and life all was soon turned to the stillness of death. We had nearly reached the Bay of Fundy when a row boat came driving toward us with a passenger. It was managed by a number of Irish laborers, then partly intoxicated. The boat being fastened by a rope, the passenger was received on board.

This done, they hurry over into their boat; she begins to fill. They rush to the forward part; she only sinks more rapidly, and is soon overturned amid the waves, leaving her unhappy inmates to struggle in the waters. The captain immediately sends out his boat for their relief; it is rowed with all speed, and on coming up to the boat two are found clinging to it, while the two others have sank in the deep abyss, to rise no more! Some of the female relations of these men were on board our vessel. On learning the sad fate of their kindred, they uttered loud groans and cries; and it was with difficulty that they could be prevented from rushing frantically into the waves! This mournful occurrence was well calculated to show the dread evil of the sin of intemperance, and the folly of that man who seeks pleasure in the intoxicating cup.

Soon again all was still and calm, save the quiet rippling of the waters as our vessel glided swiftly over the bosom of the bay. The sun was then just taking his departure behind the

western hills, while his golden hues overspread the surrounding clouds with the richest drapery the eye ever beheld. It was a pleasing scene, after having witnessed what had just passed before our eyes. Oh! then, to a thoughtful Christian, it was sweet to turn aside from this world of sin and misery, and contemplate the glories of that Being in whose presence there "is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

"The world is like an inn; for there
Men call, and storm, and drink, and swear;
While undisturbed a Christian waits,
And reads, and writes, and meditates;
Though in the dark oft times I stray,
The Lord shall lead me on my way,
And to the city of the sun, W
Conduct me when my journey's done."

A SUNDAY ON BRITISH GROUND.

On the north-east extremity of the State of Maine, lies the town of Eastport. From its lofty position it commands an extensive view of ocean scenery, together with the island of

Campo-Bello, which forms a beautiful strip of land, eight miles long and four miles broad. This island is the residence of Capt. O——, a distinguished officer of the British navy. His name stands associated with many voyages of discovery, and is deservedly enrolled in the annals of British fame. The island is a patrimony which descended to him from British ancestors. To this delightful spot Capt. O—— has retired, to spend the evening of his days—his head already whitened with the silvery locks of age, and bearing the laurels of a justly earned reputation and a well-spent life, devoted to the interests of his country. Moreover, he is one of the noblest sons of England's noble Church. A firm adherent of its principles, he here devotes much of his time and talents to the promotion of its interests. His fine old family mansion lies just on the banks of the water; and behind it, in a cluster of forest trees, may be seen peering aloft the steeple of a neat little church, where the tenants of the island assemble week after

week to enjoy the ministrations of our holy religion.

It was the privilege of the writer to spend a Sunday, during the summer of 1838, in company with the captain, to attend the religious services of this consecrated house of prayer, on British ground. The bright sun rolled through the clear, transparent heavens, and cast a cheerful air upon the scenery and surrounding objects. Here and there might be seen groups of the islanders, neatly attired, going up with gladsome steps to the house of God. They all seemed to join in the devout prayers and sublime anthems of our noble ritual, with deep devotion ; the chaunts of the service being accompanied with the soft notes of the seraphine, which fell upon the ear with a pleasing cadence. I could not but feel that though far away from the rural church of my childhood, where I had always been accustomed to worship, I was, nevertheless, at home ; since the same prayers, consecrated by the use of by-

gone ages, and the same strains of our beautiful liturgy were here wafted to Heaven.

We had the privilege of listening to an excellent practical discourse from a Connecticut clergyman, and having joined in the concluding prayers, we returned again to the house of our friend, Capt. O——. Having partaken of his princely hospitality, we repaired to the library of the captain, which is well stocked with the treasures of nautical science, and also with a choice selection of English divinity. Though a layman, the captain is deeply interested in these subjects, and devotes much of his leisure time to the prosecution of religious knowledge. I shall not soon forget the deep interest with which he inquired with regard to the history and progress of our own branch of the Church in the United States. He spoke with much warmth and enthusiasm of many of our Bishops; remarked that he appreciated their talents and their self-devotion to the cause of Christ; that the Church in England and in America were one, and that there could

not but exist the most cordial and friendly feelings between them. We returned home, just at the close of day, in a barge belonging to one of the revenue cutters. It was a calm and peaceful hour when the last lingering rays of the setting sun were flinging their golden radiance over the waters of the bay ; and, as our bark glided swiftly along, we thought of that eternal sabbath on which the sun shall never go down, for "there shall be no night there."

VII.

Recollections of a Classmate,

JOHN GREIG HOWELL, OF CANANDAIGUA, N. Y.—HIS DEATH
AND BURIAL.—FAREWELL VISIT TO HIS GRAVE BY TWO
OF HIS CLASSMATES.

THERE are scenes in life's eventful history which can never fade from memory's tablet. They are so deeply inscribed there, that the impression remains unimpaired through life's changing scenes.

Of such a character is the following, which occurred while the writer of these pages was a member of the senior-class in Yale College. Well does he recollect with what startling effect the news was borne through those old college halls, "H—— is dead." To the wearied and worn out child of sorrow, we can imagine death might prove a welcome

visitor. But when we are in the midst of youth's sweet visions of happiness, and Hope seems to shine like a pure and bright star above us; when no cloud of sorrow flits across our bright path-way; then life is indeed dear to us. Can it be, beloved friend, that thou art gone forever from our sight? that we shall not listen again to the sound of thy footsteps, hastening to yon college halls at the familiar sound of that bell which has so often called us together? Yes, alas! thy earthly studies are now closed. No longer shall we see thee gazing upward with delight* upon the starry firmament, whose wonders thou didst delight to explore, nor rambling amid the beautiful groves or climbing the rough hill sides, a delighted observer of the works of nature. Yes, thine eyes are forever closed upon all these beauteous scenes and charming prospects; and thou art now communing with those brighter spirits of a better land beyond the grave, who there, with golden harps and hearts attuned,

* Howell was exceedingly fond of the study of astronomy.

forever worship round that radiant throne! During thy sickness thy friends were all far away in that distant home. Alas! how little did they think of the bitter tidings which was soon to reach them! No mother's soft and gentle hand rested on thy burning brow. No sister's kind and soothing voice whispered to thee words of comfort. But strangers stood around thy bed and watched thy dying moments. Though strong and youthful, yet the ravages of disease preyed with wasting power on thy frame; and, in the short space of two days, the flickering flame of life has been extinguished! But we will not mourn thy sudden and untimely departure. In the language of a sweet poetess:

"We'll not mourn for thee;

Ah! we remember now one look of thine—
A deep and holy look in that bright eye—
A glance of something from the inner soul,
Which cannot die. T'was goodness; t'was that pure,
Sweet thing, that in the dark and thirsty depths
Of being, like a bright well-spring, pouring o'er all
The soul, making all brilliant in the life
Eternal. Oh! we will not mourn for thee:

The faces of thy home, all radiant
With love—the clinging grasp of tenderness
Were not for thee;—but in the darkness strange,
And 'mong these shadows, where no mother's love
Might press, there met thee one—no stranger he—
Ancient in loveliness. Thou knowest him—
'Tis he, 'tis he—like old, familiar dreams
That look is on thee.—Thee he knowest too;—
The bitterness is over. 'Mid the clear twilight
Of those silent homes, where they that rest
With Jesus wait the day, by waters still,
Under soft shades, gently he leadeth thee.”

God, who ordereth all things in wisdom, I doubt not, had a purpose of eternal mercy connected with the sudden sickness and death of this youthful disciple. It proved the means of arresting and fixing the attention of many of his classmates upon the great things of eternity, and thus seemed to be the agency, under God, for bringing a message of salvation to many hearts; at that period of life when the pleasures of the world appear to be most fascinating. How many, who have subsequently taken upon themselves the sacred vows and solemn responsibilities of the ministry,

can look back to this sad event, as the first means of directing their thoughts towards that high and sacred calling in which their lives have been spent!

The funeral solemnities which followed were deeply impressive. The slow and solemn peals of the college bell sighed mournfully through the air, as they invited the long train of weeping relatives and sympathizing friends to improve the sad event which had taken place. The whole college seemed to participate in the feelings of the bereaved. Prayer was offered by the President, and a most touchingly beautiful and pathetic address was made by Prof. —, in which he gave both a just and eloquent delineation of the character of Howell, dwelling especially upon that steady and consistent piety, which gave a crowning lustre to his life, and endeared him to all the friends of Christ. I do not think there were many dry eyes in that large assembly, and I doubt not that many a softened heart was then humbled under a sense of sin, and led by the spirit of

all grace, to cherish faith in the atoning Saviour of sinners. Infidelity and cold philosophy vanished away like shadows, while nothing was seen to be adequate to meet the exigency of a dying hour, but the religion of Jesus Christ, which consoles the spirit at its departure, and points to a home beyond the changing scenes of earth, eternal in the heavens!

An immense procession followed the remains to the grave, which lies in a plot, especially appropriated to the students of Yale College, in the beautiful Cemetery of New Haven. There was an universal stillness pervading the surrounding scene as the crowd passed along under the shadows of those tall and graceful elms which adorn and beautify the streets in the city of New Haven.

“Hark! how the sacred calm that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease;
In still small accents, whispering from the ground,
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.”

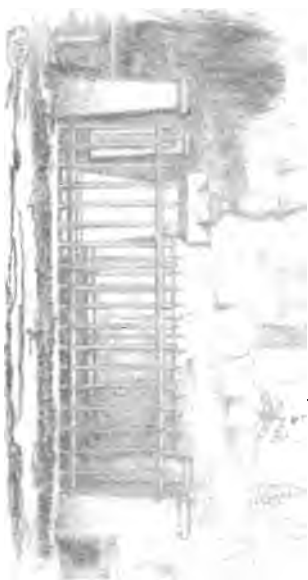
As we stood around his grave the college choir sang a funeral dirge, which was joined

in by a large part of the assembly. There is something peculiarly touching in the strains of sacred music, wafted upon the still air amid the graves of the dead! It seemed indeed to presage the higher, sweeter melody of that heavenly country, where we had every reason to think the soul of our departed friend and classmate had gone. When the solemn strains of that funeral anthem had died upon the air, the eyes of many were glistening with tears. And yet there were many who could look up through those tears, with adoring love and gratitude to God, that in the death of this young and interesting Christian there was so much consoling evidence that God had removed him to a more blessed condition in the glorious temple above.

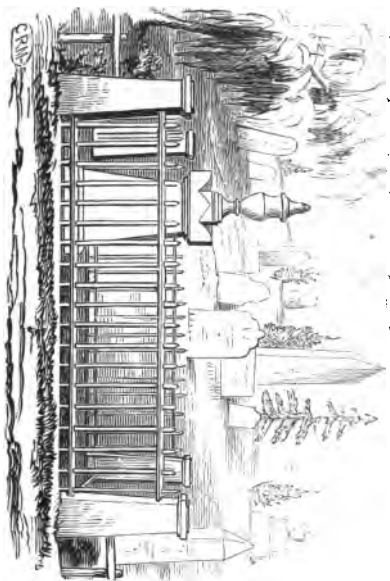
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It was some months following the occurrence of the interesting scenes, narrated above, that two college classmates might be seen, towards the close of a bright Sabbath afternoon, on their way to the city cemetery. This beautiful

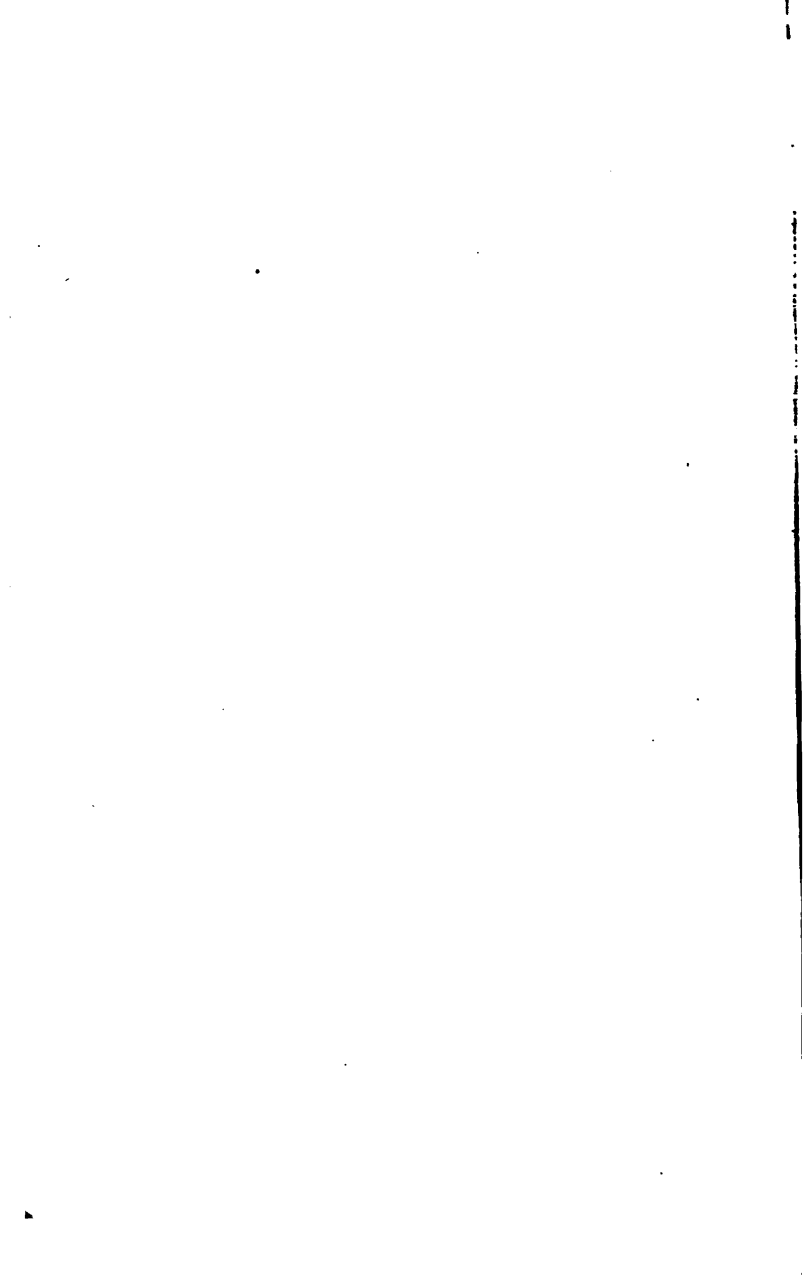
spot, situated in the suburbs of New Haven, consists of a large open square, divided into family plots, covered with marble tablets of various sizes and figures, reared by the hand of affection to mark the last resting place of the departed. Through the whole there are avenues, lined with beautiful trees, through which the citizens of New Haven may be frequently seen walking, especially upon a Sunday afternoon. No clouds dimmed the pure azure sky as the sun was gradually sinking below the horizon, casting its golden brilliance over every surrounding object. These two individuals, whom we shall name, one G——, the other R——, soon arrived at the grave of Howell. It was a tall white obelisk of marble, enclosed by a neat white wooden railing; and was erected as an affectionate token of the respect and love which his classmates cherished towards him. A weeping willow hangs its branches near the place. And a few wild flowers may be seen blooming in fragrant luxuriance over the grave.



THE GRAVE OF JOHN G. HOWELL, IN THE CEMETERY AT
NEW HAVEN, CONN.—SEE PAGE 84.



THE GRAVE OF JOHN G. HOWELL, IN THE CEMETERY AT
NEW HAVEN, CONN.—SEE PAGE 84.



There is sometimes a sweet pleasure in visiting the grave of a friend. Many hallowed memories and delightful associations are thus awakened in the mind as we recall the form and visage, the countenance once radiant with hope, once glowing with the fire and animation of life. At this moment the following conversation passed between the persons just spoken of:

“Don’t you remember,” said G——, “how brightly Howell looked on that day, as he came down with us from Mount Carmel, with his bag of mineral specimens and his box of flowers, which he found upon the sides of the mountain?”

“Yes, I do,” said R——. “He was an ardent lover of Nature. He delighted to observe how the character of God shines out in His works. Indeed, his whole character was pre-eminently lovely. Little did I think, as I gazed upon his happy countenance, and saw that winning smile which played there, that he would leave us so soon.”

"Yes," remarked G——, "what a solemn time it was, when his funeral took place. I do not think I ever felt so serious, as when we stood around his grave, committing his body to the earth. Oh! how touching was that funeral dirge, which was sung beneath those trees. I never could get over the serious impressions which this Providence then wrought upon my mind. It set me to reflecting seriously upon my condition, and prospects for eternity. A burden of sins weighed heavily upon my conscience. I was often engaged in prayer, for relief and spiritual comfort and peace.

"I remember," he continued, "on one bright Sabbath morning, not long after the funeral, I had been in my room engaged in prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures. My soul still remained in doubt and darkness. I determined, however, to walk out. It was a sweet, lovely morning. The holy, calm stillness, spread upon the face of Nature, reminded me of the Heavenly Sabbath of rest. All things around me seemed to invite the renewed child

of God to communion with his blessed Lord. The birds chaunted forth in sweet and melodious strains their morning carols, but I could not sympathize with the charming voice of Nature around me.

“Having walked along for some distance, my mind often looked up to Heaven for relief, but in vain. I at last came to this spot. I looked at that grave. It brought to mind the Christian character of our dear departed friend and classmate, Howell. I thought of his faith;—how he had renounced all his own righteousness, and cast himself as a helpless sinner upon the merits of Christ. I resolved to follow his example. It was this that seemed to shine like a beacon light over my path. I then went home and prayed to my Heavenly Father; and I, too, by the help of Divine grace, was led to embrace Christ. Oh! how changed now seemed my prospects! How different was my state of mind! All within was light, peace and love. Nature now seemed inexpressibly lovely. I could gaze upon her beauteous scenes with in-

describable pleasure. I could listen to the sweet music of the birds with delight, for "my Father made them all." And, standing, as I now do, over this grave, I think I can bless God for the solemn warning which I received, by the sudden removal into eternity of our beloved classmate. How truly may we adopt the words:—

'I love thy chastenings, oh! my God, .
They fix my hopes on thine abode;
Where, in thy presence, fully blest,
Thy stricken saints forever rest.'

By this time the shadows of evening began to deepen upon their path, and the two classmates left the spot, under the influence of many soft and tender emotions, to retrace their steps back again towards the college.

Reader, here "sleeps" one "in Jesus, whom God will bring with him." In that great day I doubt not he will be owned by Him as His, when "Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." May you follow his bright example, and, like him, die the death of the righteous.

VIII.

First Visit at Haverstraw, on the Hudson, after the death of my Aunt, in 1836.

IT was just at the calm hour of evening twilight that we drove up before our uncle's door, having rode about two miles from the shore, where we had just left one of those noble steamers that daily ply over these beautiful waters. Perhaps nowhere does the eye of the traveler rest upon more sublime, more striking scenes, than when he is making his way up this noble river. What can be more grand and awful than those tall ranges of bare and barren cliffs of rock called "the Palasades?" Or what scene can your eye rest upon more enchanting, varied, and beautiful,

than the succession of towns and hamlets, rich fields and forests, which continually rise to one's view. As the traveler beholds these transitions from one scene to another, combining such an interesting succession of objects, how many delightful trains of reflection arise in his mind! He can look in no direction without having some new and interesting object brought to his notice. To one fond of viewing scenery, in which there is combined, in striking forms, the bold, the beautiful, and the sublime, it is indeed a delightful excursion; and to a thoughtful Christian observer it affords much material for glowing thought and delightful admiration! But I trust the reader will pardon this brief digression, while we now proceed to resume the narrative. It was now many months since I had visited the home of my aunt. I well knew that that dwelling, which possessed such a charm to me once, was now no longer inhabited by her whom I had been accustomed to see. But though our dear friends are gone from those wonted scenes where we have met

them and enjoyed their society, still we love to visit the spot again in after years. I desired, once more, to sit in her parlor, to walk across the floor of that well-known and familiar room which she once occupied, to walk out upon her front stoop and view the majestic scenery of the Hudson.

That scene was beautiful, indeed. Before us lay the still waters of the noble Hudson, stretching over an extent of about twenty miles, and covered with snow-white sails. Upon the farther side, the land sloped away beautifully, into a long range of mountains, unbroken, save by the neat cottages of two neighboring villages, which ornamented the descent, and gave it a peculiar beauty. To the right and left, lay a rich valley, outspread with the rich verdure of trees and fields—now striped with the tasseled corn—and now, waving with the golden grain. The moon had just risen, and was shedding down her soft, mellow light upon the scene, causing the shadows of the trees and canvas to rest beautifully

upon the silver waves! Oh! then, I indeed felt that there is a loveliness—a perfection, and a masterly finish upon the landscape, as it comes from the hand of its Creator, which human art strives in vain to imitate! Never does the canvas speak so eloquently, as when it comes nearest to Nature's perfect model.

I ascended by a tall flight of steps, and entered the dwelling. Although the countenances of those whom I met were bright and cheerful, and seemed to give me a kind and cordial greeting, yet I felt sad. I could not forget the absent one, from whose lips I had heard pleasant and delighted converse in days gone by. The thought of this, seemed to cast a shade of gloom over this enchanting and beautiful scene. As I entered the house, and passed through its silent halls, and walked over her favorite room, now occupied by a few remaining articles which she had left behind, I felt deeply sad. But one year before, I stood in that spot, and listened to that voice—so cheerful, so animated—now hushed in death.

I caught that look of gentleness and kindness, which seems to follow me yet, as I gaze upon that portrait, which hangs upon yonder wall.

I now turned from these saddening reminiscences of the past, and looked to the other side of the picture. I thought of her, as she now is, released from earthly suffering, and now united to the great family in Heaven. Yes! dear aunt, thought I, thy memory is precious. We love to think of thee, as thou wast once—to recall that eye that sparkled with intelligence—that look of thine—once radiant with love, on which we loved to gaze so much, in the sunny hours of our childhood. But we love to think of thee also, as thou appeared in thy Christian character. Oh! that we might seek to emulate thy pure example! Oh! that, stimulated by thy Christian walk, we might be inspired to press on in our heavenward course, and to rise higher and higher in the scale of spiritual excellence, until we shall reach the perfection of the heavenly state. Such was

the example of her, upon whose history the writer is now commenting. She was appointed by an all-wise Providence to many years of suffering. Still, religion diffused a sweet peace and holy joy over her soul. As she lay upon her couch of suffering, she would frequently repeat the consoling passages of Sacred Scriptures, and draw from them the most cheering comfort and hope. Many sweet hymns she would recite, also, from time to time, with great pleasure.

She spoke of death with great composure. Said she, but a day or two before her decease, "We speak of death, but what is it? Ah! once I dreaded to think of it; but now, by the help of God, I can welcome its approach." She recognised God's hand in her sickness, and did not repine, though a great sufferer. When her little children stood around her bed side she committed them to the care of the covenant-keeping God. She charged them to follow faithfully the religious instruction which she gave

them, and earnestly besought them to join themselves to Christ. In this sweet spirit of resignation and joyful hope in Christ, she died, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Mark's Church, New York.

Reader, she, whose character has been laid before you, has gone from these earthly scenes, to mingle no more with her friends and kindred here below. Her body has been committed to the ground, in hope of the joyful resurrection at the last day. My dear reader, shall you and I be there, clad in the Saviour's righteousness? Do you belong to Christ now? Can it be said of you, that Christ sought you, a wanderer, and brought you back to his heavenly fold? Is Christ in you, the hope of glory? If this be your case, though death should come and lay his wasting hand upon you, it shall be well with you. May the Spirit of the God incline your heart to follow in the blessed footsteps of this departed servant of Christ, that so, through eternal ages, it may be your happy privilege to celebrate, in union with all

the host of the Church triumphant in heaven,
the wonders of Redceming love!

"Praise my soul, the God that sought thee,
Wretched wanderer far astray,
Found thee lost, and kindly brought thee
From the paths of death away."

IX.

A Sketch from my Ministry, in Litchfield, Conn.

DURING the years 1849, and 1850, it was the privilege of the writer to exercise the duties of the ministerial office, in the parish of —, in the County of Litchfield, Connecticut.

This parish had been once the scene of the saintly and devoted labors of Bishop Griswold. It was here, amid these romantic hills—amid a simple-hearted, intelligent, and spiritual-minded people, that this good and great man began his early ministry—a ministry which was afterward to ripen into a most glorious and fruitful harvest. That ministry was not exercised in vain. Everywhere, even now, may you behold

its impress, visible in the lives and characters of these people. There is a high moral elevation, and an exalted spiritual standard of conduct and life, such as we might naturally expect such a man would impart. Though years had passed away, it was easy to see still this traces of the good Bishop's holy labors in the parish; and as I often rambled among the fields, or climbed the hills, in search of the farm-houses of my parishioners, which were scattered far and wide over the country, I could not but call to mind how often these same hills had been trodden by the footsteps of him who once here broke the bread of life to his privileged flock.

It was here that I found many aged persons, in whose recollections the good Bishop's life and labors were treasured up as precious mementoes of their early years. One aged lady, with whom the Bishop lived, and where he studied and wrote, ever spoke of that good man with the utmost satisfaction. I shall not forget the deep interest with which another aged man,

who had also the honor of providing a home in his humble dwelling for the good Bishop, spoke to me during his last illness, of the life and ministry of Bishop Griswold. I found him confined to his sick-bed, and in a state of want. But few, if any, of his distant kindred seemed to take any interest in the aged sufferer. I relieved, as far as I could, his necessities, from the charitable fund of the parish. Oh! how he seemed to cherish the remembrance of his early pastor. At the mention of that name, a smile would kindle up in the old man's countenance, which made him forget his present bodily sufferings, and the signs of destitution by which he was surrounded. Nor were the fruits of such a ministry wanting in the descendants of these few aged disciples, who had been contemporaneous with the Bishop. They, too, had imbibed from their fathers the holy and blessed teachings of this man of God. It is one of these last individuals of whom I now proceed to bring before my readers a brief sketch:—

The person to whom I allude, Mrs. W——

was, at this time, one of the most active and devoted women in the parish. She was earnest, spiritual minded, and her bright example shed a hallowed influence upon her family and in the social circle, as well as upon the Church of God. She loved the Church with all the fondness of a true Christian heart, and ever sought to promote its prosperity by her efforts in the Sunday School, and in the sewing circle.

Years have now gone; but still the impression is vivid as the events of yesterday, of that earnest piety, that burning ardor of soul which seemed to give such a moral lustre to the character of that individual of whom I now speak. I think I can now almost see her countenance as it brightened with holy delight while she was engaged in the worship of the Sanctuary; or listened, with intense interest, to the words of instruction and counsel, as they fell from the lips of her pastor. None could witness her conduct while in the house of God, and not be struck with the conviction that here was indeed the living reality of the religion of

Christ. Her efforts were not confined to the Church only. She was faithful in her duty as a Christian mother, and occupied the hallowed hours of God's sacred day of rest in inculcating heavenly truth upon the minds of her children.

As might be expected, her children grew up in the sweet moral likeness of their mother. Her only daughter soon became a bright ornament in the parish. She was confirmed, and soon after surrounded, with her mother, the same holy table, and united in celebrating the Saviour's dying love. During the winter of 1849 and the spring of 1850, Mrs. W—— was overtaken by the hand of disease. It became evident that she was fast declining under the power of that fatal disease—consumption. The cough, the hectic flush upon her cheek, and the gradual diminution of bodily strength and vigor—all these seemed to indicate the approach of death. But was she afraid to die? Was it bitter to her to leave this fair earth and all its fair flowers and endeared scenes?

Oh, no? There was with her "a light at evening time." Religion cast its cheering radiance, and poured around her dying pillow the blessed consolation and comfort of the Gospel. It was my custom to visit my sick parishioner always upon a Sunday afternoon, and never did I find her otherwise than serene and tranquil, always anxious for her Pastor to converse and pray with her. I now remember distinctly the last time I was privileged to visit this dying Christian. It was on the afternoon of a bright summer's day, in the month of July, 18—, my duties at the church being over, I set out to visit my sick friend, and offer her that spiritual consolation which it lay in my power to bestow.

As I walked along, a sweet repose like that of a quiet country sabbath seemed to rest upon the whole face of nature. The cattle were quietly grazing in the fields, and the last rays of the sun were flinging their golden radiance on every surrounding object. I thought how emblematic this quiet repose of nature was of

the peaceful heavenly rest. As I entered her dwelling, Mrs. W—— greeted me with a smile. New beams of hope lighted up her wasted countenance while she expressed her firm faith in Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, and told of the blessed consolation which his sweet promises now gave her in this her time of need. She joined fervently in the devotions which were offered at her bed-side, and then spoke with the utmost composure of her approaching death, desiring me, if I thought proper, to make mention in her funeral discourse of her subsequent decline from spiritual life and steadfastness after having once assumed the Christian vow; and to warn others, by her example, to persevere diligently in their Christian course, and never to "*look back*" after having once "*put their hand to the plough.*"

It was at the dusk of evening I left that home of affliction, blessing God for the example of triumphant faith which I had just witnessed.

As I walked silently on, the words of "Pollock" seemed to be those I could adopt as my own :

" The room, I well remember, • • •
• • • • and all the faces too,
That crowded dark and mournfully around ;
This I remember well : but better still,
I do remember, and will ne'er forget,
The dying eye ! That eye alone was bright,
And brighter grew, as nearer death approached."

Two days after, Mrs. W——'s funeral took place at the church. A deep and solemn feeling pervaded the large concourse of friends who were assembled. I sought to improve the sad event by a brief discourse from these words of St. Paul, "To live is Christ, to die is gain." The hymn which she had selected was then sung :

" Oh ! for a closer walk with God,"

and at the close of the prayer, the procession moved slowly and solemnly to the burying ground, distant about one quarter of a mile. There in the green churchyard, repeating the impressive and solemn burial-service of the

Church, we laid beneath the ground the body of our departed sister, to rest in the joyful hope of the final resurrection. Freed from all earthly pain and sorrow, she had gone to that world of joy, where the saints are ever chaunting the praises of God and the Lamb. It was only one year from this time that I heard of the death of the daughter of Mrs. W——, at the early age of 20 years. She, too, sleeps in the churchyard, beside her mother. Both have now joined the innumerable company of the faithful in God's upper Sanctuary. Oh! let us prepare to go up and join them also.

“ Thus star by star declines,
Till all have passed away,
And morning high and higher shines
To pure and perfect day ;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.”

X.

The Death of Mrs. George Warner, of New York, Nov. 24, 1857.

THE decease of this aged and worthy lady, awakens many interesting associations connected with the past. Her many noble traits of Christian character, and her life of untiring benevolence, and effort for the destitute and suffering, seem to demand something more than a passing tribute to her worth. When the good, the useful and honored servants of Christ, die, and are gathered home to their final rest in peace, it is both right and proper to make some public record and acknowledgment of their deeds and labors of love; and to hold

up their examples for the imitation of others. Like those honored and lamented sisters, Mrs. Banyer and Miss Jay, who preceeded her only by about one week, to the heavenly rest, hers was a life of untiring effort and devotion to the cause of Christ. Says the Right Rev. Bishop Eastburn, who was for many years her attached Pastor, and warm-hearted friend and admirer :—

“Mrs. Ann Warner has, in consequence of declining health, resigned the office of manager, she has filled so well for thirty years. She has the honor of being one of the founders of the first organization in this country, for circulating the Scriptures, formed in Philadelphia; so that from the beginning, she has been engaged in the good work. Her interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of her fellow-beings, never seemed to know a pause. In very many plans of usefulness, she was the original suggester; and never failed to give her hearty aid, both in liberal donations from her means, and in time and labor, to ev-

• ery good object presented to her by others. And all this was done by her—not in the spirit of self-righteousness, but through the constraining operation of that love to Christ, which has always animated her soul. The preciousness of the Lamb of God, was her favorite theme, and she really seemed to derive the daily happiness of her being, from the contemplation of that fullness which resides in Him. The Word of God was her staff and company, and its promises her cordial;—and, in truth, if ever there was an appropriateness in the selection of an individual to the office of manager of a Bible Society, this fitness was exemplified in the case of this admirable servant of God; who, while she was laboring to scatter over the world the pages of inspiration, took those pages as the subject of her own continual study, and in them saw, to her peace and joy, Him who is invisible! While we mourn over the resignation of her trust, shall we not be encouraged by the remembrance of her bright example of holy activity to go and do likewise?”

This is indeed a most just and beautiful tribute to the memory of Mrs. Warner, from one who could well judge of her character from long and thorough acquaintance. Some few particulars of her life and history, such as the writer has been able to collect, will now be given to the reader. She was born and spent the early period of her life in the city of Philadelphia. Early in life she was made experimentally acquainted with that religion whose sustaining hopes and consolations she enjoyed through so many years, checkered often with the scenes of trial. In youthful womanhood she was an active member of St Paul's Church, Philadelphia, and was associated with a band of devout Christian women who loved the cause of Christ, and who spent their time in hallowed labors for the good of souls. She subsequently left Philadelphia and came to the city of New York, having married the late George Warner, a most devoted and revered Christian man, whose memory still survives fresh in the recollection of many now living. He was at one

time an influential member of the Legislature of New York, and was deservedly known and esteemed for his evangelical piety and usefulness.

Being a gentleman of easy circumstances, possessing a warm and sympathizing heart, his house, which was then a country seat, situated near Lafayette Place, was the home of kindly hospitality and friendship. He was exceedingly fond of cultivating flowers, and at that time it was considered a rich treat to walk through his beautiful garden, covered with gorgeous tulips and fragrant hyacinths. He was a man of eminent piety and large liberality, being, at one time, one of the chief pillars and supports of Christ's Church, and subsequently of St. Stephen's Church, in this city. In this latter Church, may be seen a monument, placed in the wall, erected to the memory of this good man; and, also, another, perpetuating the name and memory of his lamented and esteemed son, Effingham Warner. His ardent religious and devotional feelings

found their congenial exercise in meetings for prayer, singing and religious exhortation, which Mr. Warner was in the habit of gathering, and which were eminently blest, to the spiritual good of many.

He was frequently seen imparting spiritual counsel to those whom he met, and kneeling by the bed-side of the sick and dying, offering up his fervent prayers to God for them. Besides this, he was well known as one of the managers of the American Bible Society, and various other Christian institutions, for the good of the world. Thus lived, and thus died, George Warner, beloved for his piety and good works. The bare mention of his name was enough to awaken a smile of joy upon the countenance of any one who knew or had heard of him.

The late President Fisk, of Middletown University, Connecticut, in a beautiful and touching letter of condolence to his daughter upon his death, says of him :—

“In a visit to the north part of the State, I was informed of your irreparable loss in the

death of your worthy father: worthy, I say, because this is the character that all give him who knew him, with whom I have spoken on the subject. For myself, I had not the honor or pleasure of his acquaintance. I had expected this; but the time is now past. I can never know him in the flesh; but, if I be so happy as to make one of the Saints in light, I expect to meet your honored father there, and have the pleasure of forming a heavenly acquaintance with him, unless, as Mr. Whitefield said of Mr. Wesley, he should be honored with a place so much nearer the throne than myself, that I should scarcely be able to see him."

Mrs. Warner, during the lifetime of her husband, entered with enthusiasm into his various plans and operations for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom; and after his death, which occurred some twenty-five years since, she still continued a most efficient and active woman in all the benevolent Christian societies of the day. Few women have been endowed with greater gifts, or been

enabled to do more good in the sphere of usefulness in which she was placed. She was peculiarly distinguished for her urbanity and dignity of manners, and readiness in conversation, and devoted zeal in all religious undertakings, and plans to promote the spiritual good of others, and to relieve and comfort the distressed and afflicted. For many years her life has been one of suffering and affliction, having been overtaken by a severe paralysis, which has affected both her bodily and mental powers to such a degree as to prevent her from all participation in the active duties of life, and even from intercourse with her friends. Mrs. Warner died at the advanced age of eighty-one, and was buried from St. Bartholomew's Church, Wednesday afternoon, the 26th inst., the Pastor, Rev. Samuel Cooke, D.D., officiating, being accompanied with the Rev. Mr. Cruse, who officiated at the grave. Among the relatives present on that occasion were Rev. Dr. Turner, a brother of the deceased, long known and deservedly esteemed as the

professor of Biblical learning and interpretation of Scripture in the Gen. Epis. Theological Seminary; Rev. Samuel Nichols, and family, who married a granddaughter of George Warner; and E. H. Warner, Esq., who was the founder and originator of St. Bartholomew's Church, situated in Lafayette Place, New York—now one of the most flourishing congregations in the city, enjoying the labors of a most gifted and worthy Pastor. It may not be known to many, and deserves to be mentioned here that this church owes its existence to the persevering and untiring efforts of Mr. Warner. He drew the plans for its construction, and was the main instrument in organizing it and furnishing the means to build it: and over its doors may still be seen the coat of arms belonging to his grandfather, George Warner. Mrs. Warner was buried in Trinity Church Cemetery. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

XI.

Reminiscences of a Deceased Clergyman.

WITHIN the limits of the beautiful town of F——, which lies near the Sound, in the south-western portion of the State of Connecticut, there is a small burying-ground, which stands in a quiet and unobtrusive spot, near the public road. If you enter the gateway, and follow up one of the avenues, you will presently arrive at the grave of a deceased clergyman, over which there stands an exceedingly chaste brown-stone monument, in the form of a cross. It was not long ago, in the course of my rambles, that I stopped for a short time, to visit the grave just spoken of. It was during the autumnal season. A delightful repose and

quiet reigned around—such as often marks the country scene at this season. The frost had changed the color of the leaves, and thrown upon the face of Nature a rich drapery of diversified colors.

• • • • “Nature seemed,
In silent contemplation, to adore
Its Maker. Now and then, the aged leaf
Fell from its fellows—rustling to the ground—
And, as it fell, bade man think on his end.”

It is thus that Nature, when viewed with a Christian's eye, may serve to teach us lessons of heavenly truth. The fading leaves strikingly remind us of our mortality. I stopped, fastened my horse, and entered the burying-ground. As I cast my eye around me, a most charming and delightful succession of landscape rose to view. You might see, in almost every direction, the neat white farm-houses adorning the hill-side, or scattered over the valley below. Here[^] and there the cattle were quietly grazing in the fields. The beams of the sun illumined the face of Nature, and made the va-

riegated hues of the forest trees look even more gorgeous and beautiful. There is sometimes a sweet and holy satisfaction in visiting the grave of a departed friend. How vividly does it serve to call up the scenes of the past! How does it carry us back to the years that are fled! Memory will then busy herself in recalling the countenance which has for so long a time been resting peacefully and quietly in the grave; and, again, we seem to hear the familiar tones of that voice, which once fell pleasantly on our ears.

As I stood by that grave, thoughtfully musing over the past, I could not but recollect the many happy hours of social and Christian intercourse which I had spent in former years, at the house of my friend, who then officiated in St. Mark's Church, in the pleasant village of —, which lies embosomed among the hills, about ten miles to the westward. Many years have now rolled away since that period; yet, does the writer retain a most vivid recollection of him who there ministered to his flock, in the

village just described. Well do I remember the house where he lived, so pleasantly located in the centre of the village; and the Church near by, with its white gothic tower, rising up so gracefully among the trees. It was here that he came, shortly after his ordination, to labor among the people committed to his spiritual care. He soon married the elder of two interesting sisters, who each gave a charm to his home, and made it a scene of kindly hospitality, friendship, and Christian intercourse. Possessing a cheerful and lively disposition—bland and winning in his manners, and having no inconsiderable stock of information, he was the life and delight of the social circle. He was eloquent and impressive in the pulpit, and possessed the power of arresting and fixing the attention of his hearers in a remarkable degree. Nor was he wanting in zeal and unwearied devotion, in his more private pastoral duties among his flock. There soon grew up around him, as might be expected, a large circle of devoted friends and zealous parishioners; and

many seals were added to his ministry. That ministry, however, was destined to be of short continuance. He was permitted to exercise the duties of his high and sacred calling only ten brief years, ere he was called to his account. Alas! how soon are our earthly hopes blasted! how quickly comes the cloud of affliction, to dim the brilliance of our earthly prospects! Scarcely three years had elapsed, before the subject of this brief sketch was called to part with his wife and his child, in all the bloom of its early infancy. His own health, too, which had long been delicate, began to fail. He tried the power of medicine and foreign travel, but in vain; and finally came back to the old familiar home of his childhood, as it appeared, to die beneath that parental roof, where, in early life, he had ever been accustomed to the watchful eye and tender care of those who loved him.

Well does the writer remember his last visit to his sick and dying friend. The scene which I then witnessed, even now, after the lapse of

fourteen years, is fresh and vivid, as if but the event of yesterday. It was a day in the lovely month of June, 184—, that I rode out for this purpose. As I passed along, the country around, in all its beauty and richness, lay spread out like a luxuriant garden. The trees decked in their rich foliage, the verdant meadows, the golden fields of grain—all presented a sweet and varied picture too beautiful for description. I soon reached a lofty elevation from which the eye suddenly rests upon that broad expanse of waters, the Sound, upon which many a ship was sailing; while the brilliant beams of the sun lighted up the glittering waters, and cast over the whole scene the air of joy and cheerfulness. I soon arrived at the door of the house, an ancient but comfortable dwelling, where lived the now aged parents and two sisters of my friend. Mother!—the sweetest name to memory. How does the love of a mother weave itself around the tender chords of our early life, and still continue to follow us through all the brightness and dark-

ness of our earthly life ! The old memories of home bind us with a magic power, and when sickness and death come, how natural for us to wish to die at home, to breathe out our existence within those well-known doors, surrounded by the faces we once loved so well ! How much truth and force is there in the following lines of sweet Cowper :—

“ In all my wanderings, round this world of care
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down.

• • • • •

I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return, and *die at home* at last.”

As I entered the door, the first person I met was the mother. Her countenance wore the expression of anxious solicitude, as well as deep affection. She kindly welcomed me as she took my hand and led me to the chamber of her sick and dying son. My feelings, as I entered that room, cannot well be described. “ Here,” thought I, “ is one with whose countenance I have long been familiar—one with

whom I have been many years associated in the work of the ministry—one with whom I have spent many an hour of happy intercourse and Christian fellowship. But, alas! these happy hours are now nearly past, no more to return on earth.” As I entered the room, he bade me good morning, and greeted me with a smile. He lay bolstered up with pillows, his countenance pale and thin, and evidently was rapidly wasting away with consumption. Beside him, upon the table, lay the Bible and Prayer-Book, which had long been his chosen companions. Said he, “G——,” familiarly addressing me by my Christian name, “you will long be occupied in the noble work of preaching the Gospel after I am gone; if you ask me, now, the *ground of my hope*, as I draw near to the grave, I say with all sincerity, that my *only comfort and consolation* is in the *cross* of my *dying Saviour*. I fear,” he added, “that we spend too much of our time, while in health and strength, in splitting hairs about what is of comparatively little consequence. Be as-

sured, as I draw near to the grave, all my sympathies and all my hopes cling more and more closely to the cross. There is the only hope of a dying sinner." Such were the last words that fell from the lips of my friend which it was my privilege to hear. I never saw him again after that visit. But these his dying words are still remembered, and they furnish striking testimony to the power of faith in a crucified Saviour to sustain and comfort the departing soul of the Christian. As I think of them, my thoughts are sometimes elevated to yon celestial city, where I fancy I can see my departed friend and brother, standing among the blessed company of the redeemed, and there chaunting forth the praises of Him who hath bought us with His blood :—

" See where he walks on yonder mount that lifts
Its summit high, on the right hand of bliss,
Sublime in glory, talking with his peers
Of the incarnate Saviour's love."

Reader, wouldst thou live as esteemed and die as happy and peaceful as did the subject of

this brief sketch? Meditate seriously upon thy latter end; seek to know, by happy experience, the purifying and saving influences of the Gospel. Let thy thoughts often dwell upon the wonders of redeeming love, and all thy hope and trust be reposed upon the cross of Christ, thy Saviour.

XII.

Recollections of Mrs. Banger and Miss Jay.

WITH what sweet satisfaction does the mind often dwell upon the memory of our departed Christian friends! How delightful is it to recall their past intercourse with us—their looks and actions, as they once seemed to us, in days that are gone! While memory thus retraces the persons and scenes of former days, the mind may likewise derive spiritual profit from the contemplation of their holy example and their Christian lives.

The names of the two individuals, mentioned above, are associated with all that is good and lovely in the Christian character;

and will long continue to be held in reverence by all who can appreciate true Christian excellence.

The writer's recollection of them extends back as far as the year 1824. Though then but a child, he can distinctly recall them, as they then appeared—the countenance of the one, revealing a firm and dignified expression, resembling very much that of the parent; while, upon the countenance of the other, the beholder might notice a look of gentleness and sadness, indicative of some domestic affliction, that time had not been able to wear away. At this period, the sisters were living with their aged and honored parent, John Jay, at the family mansion, at Bedford, N. Y. As the writer's father was then the Rector of the Episcopal Church, of which they were active members, he had, of course, frequent opportunities of seeing and knowing them. They were present every Lord's day at the parish church, and took an active part in gathering the children of the neighborhood into the Sun-

day-school. Frequently might they be seen entering the abode of some poor widow, or suffering orphan, to administer spiritual comfort, or provide for their physical wants. No one who knew them, could easily forget them, whether as they appeared at home, or in the social circle, or while actively employed in their heaven-born labors of love. The Jay mansion, where they resided, was situated about two miles north of the church and parsonage, where the present writer lived. A large and commodious building, it stood embowered in fine groves of woodland; and from it you might see, as far as the eye could reach, the swelling hills and valleys, in beautiful succession, for which Westchester county is so remarkable. It was not unfrequently the writer's custom, in those childish days, to ascend some one of these rising eminences, to meditate upon some favorite theme, amid the inspiring beauties of the natural prospect. From one of these, the Jay mansion was distinctly visible. Here you might see, also, the

hills covered with woodland—the rich and fruitful valleys between, covered with meadows, corn-fields, and pastures;—here you might notice the small stream, too, winding its way along through the landscape, with herds of cattle and sheep feeding upon its green banks; while, in another direction, you might notice the antique parish church, that formed another very striking feature in the landscape. Amid such beautiful, quiet scenery, compounded of hill and dale, land and river, woods and valleys—all sweetly blended together, to form the beauty of the landscape—these two eminent servants of God resided for eleven years, in seclusion and retirement—far removed from the gay attractions of city life—that they might bestow a tender and watchful sympathy over their ancient and honored father, around whom their tenderest affections were centred. Surrounded here, also, as they were, by many of the humble habitations of the poor, their benevolent natures found here ample scope for their exercise; and they doubtless felt that, in

ministering to the necessities of even one poor and afflicted child of God, or, in winning even a single soul to Christ, they were doing a glorious work, which would far overbalance any sacrifice which it may have cost them, to have left behind them the attractions of city life.

Thus occupied, in the unremitting discharge of their duties at home, as well as in active efforts to relieve the poor, and seeking to gather into Christ's fold those that were ignorant of the truths of God's word and strangers to his grace, they remained with their father until after the period of his death, which took place May 17, 1829.

This event cast a saddening gloom not only over that household which had watched over its head with so much tender solicitude, but over the whole neighborhood and country. John Jay, the distinguished and honored patriot, the friend and associate of Washington, who had borne a noble part in the formation of this great republic, died honored and lamented by the whole country, whose respect and confi-

dence he had so richly enjoyed during his lifetime. His funeral, which was marked by great simplicity, was attended at the parish church, amid the affectionate tears of his family and the warm sympathies of neighbors and friends, who had assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to this good and truly great man. After the appropriate service, a sermon was preached by the minister of the parish, setting forth the Christian virtues of the deceased, and holding up his example for imitation. The two sisters, soon after this, bid farewell to the old Bedford mansion, around which so many tender and touching associations were gathered, and purchased a residence in Bond street, in the city of New York, which was henceforth to be their future home. Here they resided for a period of twenty-seven years. During those years they lived in unremitting kindness towards each other, enjoying the society of their friends and kindred. Their time was hallowed by the daily discharge of their Christian duties. They cultivated the

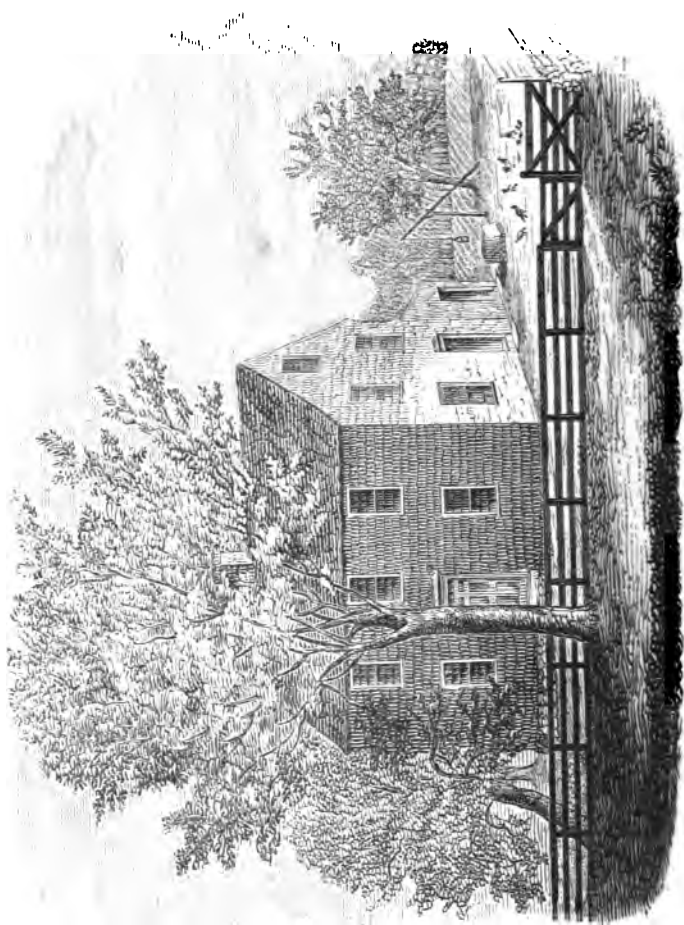
Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity. In their lives was revealed a beauty and purity of walk and conversation which showed indeed that they belonged to Christ. In various ways did they labor, especially in enlarged and ever-increasing charities, for diffusing abroad over a sinful and suffering world the rich consolation of the Gospel. These charities, which were given in a quiet way, and which embraced every variety of Christian and charitable effort, constitute the brightest monument which they have left behind them; and will perpetuate their memory along the ages to come. They will be embalmed fresh in the grateful hearts of *many* a lone widow, *many* a destitute orphan, *many* a self-denying, struggling missionary of the cross in foreign lands. They died as they lived, in the Christian faith, within a week of each other; the one on the 13th of November, the other on the 21st of the same month, in the year 1857, manifesting to the last that simple reliance upon the merits of Christ, which marks the true Christian believer, and which can

alone cheer and support him in the hour of death.

Long will the names of these two Christian sisters be loved and venerated in the Church of Christ on earth! Long may their bright examples shine, amid the darkness of this world, alluring others into the delightful paths of holiness, virtue, and goodness. To each might be applied, with striking truth, the words of a Christian poet:—

“ Servant of Christ, well done !
Praise be thy new employ ;
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour’s joy.”





THE OLD HOMESTEAD OF MY GRANDFATHER.—SEE PAGE 134.

XIII.

The old Homestead of my Grandfather.

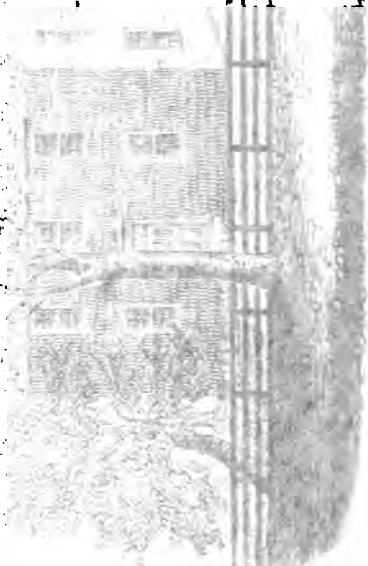
"Happy he, whom neither wealth nor fashion,
Nor the march of the encroaching city,
Drives an exile
From the hearth of his ancestral homestead.

We may build more splendid habitations—
Fill our rooms with paintings and with sculptures,
But we cannot
Buy with gold the old associations!"

—LONGFELLOW.

IN the south-western part of the State of Connecticut, on a beautiful eminence, near the waters of Long Island Sound, there stands a small village, from which the eye of the beholder can rest upon a most charming succession of landscape

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As I have looked out upon that beautiful pros-

pect, with its varied succession of field and forest, with now and then a sacred spire lifting itself through the foliage, and, to enhance the deep interest of the scene—the whole view skirted by the blue sleeping waters of the Sound—I must confess that my eye could never tire, nor mind cease to admire. I speak particularly of this scene, as it lies very near—not much more than one mile from “my Grandfather’s old homestead.” It is now an old and dilapidated structure, which has probably stood something less than one hundred years. It was built in the style of that period, with its plain, square windows; its door in front having a huge iron latch, and a large stone chimney, running upward through the centre of the building. Near by stands the tall well-sweep, with its “old oaken bucket,” from which you might draw a most refreshing draught of the coldest water in a warm day. A huge tree stands in front of the door, whose branches have so often waved in the breezes; and close by, the barn,

which was well stocked with hay and grain, for the winter's use.

. As I often ride or walk in that direction, from my residence, which is in that lovely village just referred to, I cannot but stop and take a look at the old building. To be sure, it is old, and going to decay. The dark, weather-beaten shingles are falling out from the roof. Its rooms are deserted, and no longer echo back the tread of the feet of former years. The broken panes are visible in the shattered windows. But, nevertheless, it looks interesting, and around it, shattered as it is, there cling many golden associations of days that are past. I love, as I said before, occasionally to stop and look at it, since it recalls to my mind so vividly the presence of my grandfather, and the several events of an interesting nature which happened there. As this old building derives its chief interest as being the residence of my grandfather, an old revolutionary hero, it may not be amiss for me to give

the reader some particulars of that individual's life and history.

He was born in the parish of G——, Connecticut, April, 1757. His youth was spent in those stirring and eventful days, when our country was engaged in those perilous struggles and conflicts, that finally terminated in the glorious triumph of freedom and right over in justice, tyranny and oppression. As might be expected, the youth of that day entered with a noble spirit of self-sacrifice into that memorable conflict.

My grandfather also felt the inspiration which fired the youthful sons of many of our countrymen, and resolved to enter the service. He enlisted as a common soldier at the early age of nineteen years; and joining the Continental army, proceeded to the city of New York, and was there at the memorable time of the declaration of Independence. He was present when the soldiers demolished the statue of King George, that stood in the Bowling-Green, near the battery, on Broadway. He

was present also when the battle was fought at Flatbush, L. I. ; and saw the British take possession of the fortifications on Brooklyn Heights, after they had been quietly abandoned by the Americans during the night of August 30, 1776. He assisted likewise in erecting the fortifications at Red Hook, which was done during the night, that our army might, if possible, take advantage of the enemy ; and, while engaged in his trying duty at this period, my grandfather, suffering from exposure and hardship, was visited with sickness, and spent some time in the city hospital. But though suffering much from sickness and exposure, being sometimes obliged to sleep out upon the ground, in consequence of the scarcity of beds and tents, yet did the old soldier still keep to his post of duty and sacrifice. He still continued with the army as they marched on through the County of Westchester, after the city had been evacuated by the Americans. When, shortly after, the famous battle was fought at White Plains, he was there, and stood amid the smoke of the

cannon, while balls from British muskets flew on either side of him. After the occurrence of that signal defeat, he still followed on with the army, encamping with them at Tarrytown and North Castle, and then leaving the army, he returned to his native town, arriving there on Christmas day, 1776. Afterward, he enlisted again in the service, and set out from his home once more to join the army which had already proceeded on its way for the purpose of taking Gen. Burgoyne. On arriving at Ridgefield, news was received of the capture of Burgoyne. Thereupon he retraced his way back again towards home. This was the last of my grandfather's participation in the revolutionary contest. He now came home, and soon after took up his abode upon a small farm of a few acres, which he purchased with the avails of his industry. Here he erected that "old homestead," where he spent so many days. Here he married his then youthful bride. Here he brought up his family. Here how many thrilling scenes, of either a sad or

joyous nature, have been witnessed ! Dark and dismal clouds have cast their shadows of gloom over that dwelling, as one after another of its inmates have sickened and died. There hearts felt the agony of bereavement, as they mourned the sudden and untimely departure of a youthful daughter in all the bloom of health and beauty. In later years, again, they felt the blighting touch of sorrow, as their only surviving daughter was removed by a painful and suffering death. I remember well her sickness, though then but a boy. I remember how she loved to hear the Bible read, and how fervently she would join in the prayers that were offered at her bed-side. When told that her disease was past remedy, she expressed a spirit of resignation to the will of our Heavenly Father, and died, frequently dwelling with delight upon the expressive words of that striking hymn contained in the Book of Common Prayer :—

“When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear,

I see my Maker, face to face,
Oh ! how shall I appear ?”

She dwelt with great comfort upon the two concluding verses, than which it would be difficult to select any better adapted to impart comfort and hope to a dying Christian :

“ But Thou hast told the troubled mind,
Who doth her sins lament,
That faith in Christ’s atoning blood,
Shall endless wo prevent.

“ Then never shall my soul despair,
Her pardon to procure,
Who knows Thine only Son hath died,
To make that pardon sure.”

Of that household, four sons still survive. Three of them reside near their father’s old home. One followed the sacred profession of the ministry, and is the father of a numerous family, to which belongs the present writer. I have now to add to the annals of that “ old homestead,” the departure of my grandmother, who died in 1842, and that of my grandfather, last of all, who died in 1852, at the advanced age of ninety-five years. Yes ! the old soldier has

gone to his rest. He sleeps with his departed kindred, the last great sleep. No longer do we see his noble form, his speaking eye, or listen to the familiar tones of the old patriarch of ninety winters. Those happy days when we sat around the hearthstone, beneath his hospitable roof, where his children and grandchildren used to assemble a happy group, to listen to the story of those battle-scenes, are now passed away forever. If you walk a short way down to the village burying-ground, you will see a tall, thick slab of white marble, which records his birth, his age, and his death.

I like to stray sometimes among the graves of that graveyard, and read the inscriptions—some so defaced by the hand of time as to be scarcely visible. They remind you of those who once spoke, thought and acted, amid the busy haunts of men; of those whose faces were once as bright and cheerful as your own, and whose voices were once listened to with so much delight. As you think of the dust that now sleeps so quietly and peacefully beneath

those green sods, it will serve to call up recollections of our departed kindred. But to me, it seems not half so eloquent, as "that old Homestead of my Grandfather," with its ancient trees before it, planted by his own hand, with its old, decayed chimney, now smokeless, and its broken hearthstone. These seem to possess a melancholy, yet a sweet and holy interest. They are relics around which cling rich associations and precious memories, and enable us to receive instruction from those whose voices were long since silent in the grave. It is true of such an one, that "being dead he yet speaketh"—"speaketh" by his courage and faithful devotion to his country—"speaketh" by the power of his Christian life and example. Yes! he "speaketh" by those moral virtues, and beautiful Christian traits and endowments that were visible in his earthly course. These give immortality to the man. The corroding touch of time will deface and destroy the marble monument. The lapse of ages will, ere long, cause the old pilgrim's house to fall,

but his goodness will not die. This will live in the heart, and be embalmed ever with grateful thoughts in the memory. Let us then take consolation, as we call up to our minds the memory of departed Christian kindred and friends, and say, in the words of a beautiful poet:—

“Oh ! though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only,
Such as these have lived and died.”

XIV.

Parish Annals.

CHAPTER I.

First visit to the parish of ——.—Welcome reception at the house of a friend.—Reflections.—A walk.—Striking scenery.—Description of the Parish Church; its Architecture; its Bell.—Description of the Village Burial-ground.—The grave of a former Pastor.

IT was in the spring of 185—, in the month of May, that the writer, having obtained a kind letter of introduction from the venerable and excellent Bishop of Connecticut, set out for the purpose of visiting the parish of ——. I took the cars for the city of M——, and thence proceeded by steamer to the village of ——, lying on the eastern shore of one of the noblest rivers of New England. The sail down its beautiful

waters was a delightful one. Every thing seemed to betoken the opening season of spring. A warm sun cast its enlivening rays upon the surrounding landscape. Now and then you might see the industrious farmer, busy in ploughing his fields or preparing his little garden for the reception of the seed. The time flew swiftly by as our noble steamer pushed her way down the river and soon brought us to the place of my destination. It was near evening that we came to the landing, just as the sun's rays were fast declining and sinking below the hills which here line the border of the river. I stepped on shore, and was soon cordially welcomed by my friend, who accompanied me to his commodious and hospitable mansion, and introduced me to his excellent family. After presenting my letter of introduction, I was cordially received by the vestry of the parish; and after officiating the next day to a good congregation, received a unanimous call to the charge of the parish.

I soon found myself among a most affection-

ate and devoted band of parishioners. I remember well with what new and fresh interest I looked upon each countenance that I met, now that they stood towards me in the relation subsisting between the spiritual shepherd and his flock. I thought how glorious and blessed was the work of a faithful shepherd of Christ's fold—how heavenly the task of winning poor wandering souls to Christ, and watching over their spiritual course. Surely this thought ought to make the minister of Christ faithful. When he considers the solemn account which he will be called upon to render up at last, in the great day, of the time and talents committed to him, he cannot but pause and reflect upon his responsibility, and frequently send up a silent prayer to heaven to enable him to act the part of a faithful shepherd.

It was with some such reflections as these that the writer entered on his duties as the Pastor of this interesting and zealous flock.

Not many days after I walked out to see the spot which was henceforth to be the scene of my ministerial labors.

One who has never visited this portion of the country can scarcely conceive the rare and wild beauty of the scenery along the banks of the Connecticut. From the house of my friend, where I now am standing, the view presented to the eye of the beholder is exceedingly beautiful and interesting. You here behold the majestic river winding along its serpentine course amid the hills and meadows, forming a scene which imparts continued variety to the picture. The snowy sails are ever moving along upon its bosom. Steamboats are passing and repassing. Upon the opposite bank may be seen country-seats, farms, and cottages, with the adjoining woods and groves, altogether forming a charming diversified scene.

The village of — is divided into two smaller villages, or hamlets, each having a landing for steamboats and other vessels. A road, lying a little back from the wild and

rocky banks of the river, leads from one to the other.

As you walk along this road the country on the east rapidly ascends, sometimes almost precipitous; and from the heights above not unfrequently a most unexpected disclosure of the wildest and most romantic scenes will burst upon the eye. It is upon one of these heights, about midway between the two landings, that the Episcopal Church stands, on a most commanding elevation. So lofty is this spot, that the church may be seen for a distance of twelve miles by any one viewing it from the deck of a steamboat upon the river.

I sauntered leisurely along, and soon arrived at the spot just alluded to, whereon the church stands. Here the view of the river and other surrounding objects is also surpassingly fine. The church, with a plain unpretending exterior, built after the fashion of that early period, was erected about the year 1797. The interior is plain. A simple arch overhead is supported by long heavy fluted columns. It contains an

organ of considerable size and much power, and is furnished with a bell, which is certainly a rare curiosity on account of its great antiquity. There is an inscription upon it, dating back 1035 years. It is as old as 807 after Christ, and was one of those Spanish convent or church bells, a number of which, some years ago, found their way to this country, and were distributed in various places through the land. Could that old bell tell its history, how many interesting scenes would it disclose!

To a pious observer it is indeed an interesting sight of a Sunday morning to behold the various groups of men, women, and little children, ascending on all sides (as it literally is here) the hill of Zion, and bending their steps towards the house of God to join in its holy worship. How truly can they say, with David of old: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, oh! Jerusalem. Jerusalem is as a city that is compact together. Thither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,

unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

After viewing the church, I sat down for a few moments upon a rock, to behold once more the delightful scenery. It was a soft and balmy spring morning. Nature was putting on her robe of green, and the sweet music of birds might be heard on all sides, as if desiring to join in the universal hymn of praise that was wafted up to Heaven. I sat for some time enjoying the scene, and absorbed in reflection; but perceiving it was now late, I now prepared to descend the hill-side, and retraced my steps back again to the house of my friend. On my way, I stopped for a few moments to notice the village burial-ground, which lies in a secluded and rural spot, separated only by a narrow piece of wood from the river. Here lay the mortal remains of many who from time to time had been committed to the silent earth, there to await the great resurrection. Now, a simple, unpretending slab, and now, a tall, massive pyramid might be seen, bearing each their appropriate

inscription; while, in another spot, a small stone might be seen, marking an infant's grave. Many of them were overgrown with flowers—sweet emblems, thought I, of the fragrance that lives beyond the tomb.

“This lovely bud, so young, so fair,
Called hence by early doom,
Just came to show how sweet a flower
In paradise would bloom.”

Among others, I noticed also the graves of three members of the family of the kind friend, at whose hospitable mansion I was staying, adding another proof that wherever we go, there are none exempt from afflictions. Here, too, stood the monument of one who was formerly the beloved and devoted pastor of this people. He was (I learned subsequently) a burning and a shining light. Filled with a deep sense of the awful responsibility of his sacred office, he had made it his chief aim to preach among his people the unsearchable riches of Christ. His labors were blessed, and many souls, through his instrumentality,

had been converted to God, and added to his Church. Though dead, he yet lives in the warm affections and cherished remembrances of his flock. Two of his sons* are now eminent divines, and laboring successfully in other portions of the Church. How is such a spot calculated to teach us the vanity of life, and the emptiness of those objects of human ambition, which the world pursues so eagerly! "Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."—*Psalms*.

I now left the burying ground and descended the hill, and soon entered again the house of my friend, to mingle, once more, in the kind, friendly family circle, who seemed determined to do all in their power to render my stay with them pleasant and delightful. If the reader has followed the narrative thus far,

* The Rev. Dr. Amos B. Beach, of Binghampton, N. Y., and the Rev. Dr. Alfred B. Beach, Rector of St. Peter's Church, New York.

with interest, he will perhaps desire to learn something more of the author's future labors here, and of the character of the interesting and worthy people, among whom these labors were bestowed. Of them we design to give some brief notice in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

State of the Parish; account of some of the author's parishioners.—Future labors; their results.—The author's Study.—Thrilling adventure at the Ferry.—Frequent rambles.—Beautiful scenery.—Reflections.—A favorite walk.

Several months had now elapsed since the occurrence of the events narrated in the preceding chapter. Upon my removal into the parish, I found it to be in a somewhat depressed condition. It had been for a time deprived of the ministrations of our holy religion, without which no parish can thrive spiritually. Beside, some unhappy questions of a secular nature

had been drawn in, and were suffered to alienate the affections of some of its members from each other. Still, I found there, not a few whose attachment to the church was ardent and unabated, and who would not suffer any questions of worldly policy to estrange them, for a single moment, from the church of their affections. Among these I may mention the name of my friend —, before alluded to in this narrative. He and his excellent family were ever first and foremost in the promotion of the interests of this humble branch of our Zion. They enjoyed its delightful worship and precious privileges, and longed to see it thriving and prosperous. Another individual, a venerable old man with white locks, now between eighty and ninety years of age, the senior warden of the parish, was indeed an old and long-trying friend of the church. His wife, an aged, devotedly pious person, and his daughters, each entered, with alacrity and zeal, into every plan adopted for the welfare of the church. His house might well be called

“the clergyman’s home.” Never have I entered it without receiving a kind and cordial greeting. How many a delightful conversation have I enjoyed with the members of this interesting household, upon spiritual and heavenly things; and as I have read from the sacred volume, and then united with them in prayer, I can truly say, that it “has been good for me to be there.”

It was delightful to listen to this aged patriarch, who had been born amid these hills, and who was present when the first stick of timber was borne upon the site of the church. From him I learned many interesting reminiscences of the country, as well as the history of the parish.

After laboring some months among this people, I had the satisfaction of beholding the parish manifesting a deeper interest in religious things than they had hitherto done. The church was attended by larger and more attentive congregations, and a more cordial spirit of unity and good feeling began to ex-

ist among its members. I had now become acquainted with most of my parishioners. Their faces were familiar, and among them, I was delighted to recognize, not only those professedly attached to, and belonging to my own church, but many others, belonging to various other religious denominations, whom I knew worshipped the same God and Saviour, and trusted in his all-sufficient merits for their salvation. Many of these, residing in the hamlets below, some three miles distant from their own church, were frequent, and often constant attendants upon our worship. It was pleasing to see them there, Sunday after Sunday, joining in the solemn and appropriate liturgy of our church. Oh! that Christians might be more united than they are! Let us all strive to promote this unity, by cultivating a spirit of love and kindness towards one another.

“Rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other—blamed enough elsewhere—but strive,
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden, in our share of woe.”

Encouraged by these evidences of the success of my ministrations, I labored on among the members of my flock. Knowing that without the Divine blessing, human instrumentality would be utterly vain, I sought for the influences of the blessed spirit to descend and water the heavenly seed which had been sown. To Him I would ascribe all the success of my humble endeavors to win these precious souls, and bring them within the peaceful, delightful fold of Christ.

My study, which was a neat and well-furnished room, fitted up by the kindness and generous hospitality of my friend, —, overlooked the waters of the river. The scene from my front window, as I sat there, busy with my books and paper, was delightfully pleasing. A small ferry-boat, large enough to contain two or three horses and carriages, was every now and then crossing the river, as there are no bridges in this vicinity. I learned from one who had acted as ferry-man for several years, a most thrilling adventure.

In the spring, this river is subject sometimes to great freshets. The snow among the mountains, melted down by the warm sun, pours down in innumerable currents into the river, causing it to be much swollen, and, not unfrequently buildings, houses and barns, and sometimes families, are swept away.

It was on one of these seasons of freshet in the river, that Mr. —, the gentleman just spoken of, undertook to ferry a team, with a large load of hay, across the river. The wind was blowing fresh, as the company started from the shore, consisting of the ferry-man, his boy, who assisted him, and the teamster, with his load of hay. They had proceeded safely as far as the middle of the river, when the wind seemed to swell into a fierce gale. The clouds now began to collect, in wild and fearful commotion. No sounds could be heard, save the rough and hoarse waters of the swollen river. Amid the howlings of the wind, and the roar of the waters, the boat became perfectly unmanageable. Such was

the fierce tumult of the waves and wind, as to carry under the boat in a moment, with all her crew. By some strange chance of fortune, the team and driver were saved. The oxen became disengaged from the cart, and swam to the other side, and were also saved. The ferry-man, Mr. —, after being thrown, with his boy, into the angry and tumultuous waters, swam down amid the current, the boy clinging to his back with a death grasp. He tried to shake him off, fearing that he would drown him, but found he could not. In the meantime, the interested crowd of spectators on the shore, were anxiously waiting and gazing, with dim eye through the darkness, to see the fate of the unfortunate crew. They immediately got out a large boat—followed hastily along the shore, and rushed speedily to the aid of the ferry-man and his boy. Both were saved, and the joyful news was soon borne to every house in the village. When Mr. — narrated to me this wonderful adventure, he added: “I never

expected to weather the fearful perils of that awful gale."

But to return to my narrative. I cannot but look back now with delight to the many pleasant hours which I spent in that study. The family with whom I lived consisted of the individual just spoken of, who had once had the care of the ferry, his wife, and two children. They kept an "inn" and boarding house, and were exceedingly kind and attentive to those who lived with them. From my neat, cozy study, when wearied with fatigue, I would go out and ramble among the fields, or among the groves of woodland, consisting of spruce, hemlock, and chestnut, which here border on the river. Not unfrequently my path led over the eminence on which the church stands. Walking a little beyond this point, in a north direction, you see a beautiful bay, which here sets in from the river, and which, half a century ago, was filled with salmon. This bay, narrowing itself down gradually into a small river, runs some two or three miles in a

north-easterly direction, there furnishing water-power to carry several factories.

From the point just described, a scene opens to view, seldom exceeded in beauty and magnificence. The noble river is seen for a dozen miles, or more, winding its way among the green patches of meadow, and woodland, and bushes. As I have sat there, gazing upon this varied and beautiful scene, now looking upon the river, covered with its snow-white sails, now upon the hill-side and grassy meadows, wherein might be seen the cattle or sheep grazing quietly,—I have thought how much there was in the quiet beauty of such a scene to lift up the heart in adoration to God. If the peace of God rests upon the soul, it can behold there a celestial beauty and loveliness resting upon every object.

Sometimes too, as I have cast my eye round upon the various farm-houses and cottages of my parishioners, visible far and near, lying scattered in various directions over the hills, thoughts of my own situation and responsibility

would come over my mind, and serve to cast a shade of anxious thought over my brow. How precious is the soul, bought with the precious blood of Christ—"Redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." And is it indeed true that we are charged with the care of souls? precious souls for whom Christ died? With thoughts like these how often have I traveled round among these hills, from one to another of the houses of my parishioners, seeking to impress upon their minds and hearts the great things of eternity.

There was one direction in which I often bent my steps. It was by a foot-path leading over a steep hill. This path led the way to a group of houses which lined the road on either side. These houses, many of them the humble habitations of the poor, were frequently the scene of my pastoral visitations. Here I always received a most kind and cordial welcome, and some of my most delightful interviews have been held beneath the roofs of these

humble cottages. Here I found, not indeed those elegant ornaments and expensive furniture which adorn the dwellings of the rich and fashionable, but that which, in the sight of God, is of far higher price—souls endued with heavenly piety, and clad with the celestial robes of humility, faith, meekness, long-suffering, charity.

A few brief sketches of character, which I there met with, will be presented to the reader's notice in a succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER III.

A Christmas Eve Service in the Country.—Interesting delineations of Christian Character among the Poor of the Parish.

It was now drawing near the Christmas season of 185—. The younger members of the parish have been busily engaged for some days in decorating the church with evergreens. In

the country churches in Connecticut, it is usual to observe Christmas "Eve," as a preparatory service—a practice which was introduced at a very early day—probably borrowed from the English Church, who celebrate what is called a Christmas vigil. I have always thought it a most appropriate and beautiful custom, commending itself at once to every Christian heart. Even among the Christians of different religious denominations, I have heard no objection made to its observance, but, on the contrary, there exists a growing disposition among them, to mark with some religious regard, this hallowed and time-honored festival, which commemorates the most important and joyous of all events which have happened since the world's creation. I had been busily engaged during the day, making preparation for this service. The evening repast was over, and the moon was shining out upon the snow-clad hills. The sleigh-bells went merrily by, ringing merrily out upon the clear, cold evening air. Presently, the tones of the church-bell might

be heard, as peal after peal sounded forth upon the air, and were echoed among the hills. And now, thought I, in how many a land are heard those joyous Christmas chimes, awakening glad emotions in thousands and millions of Christian hearts.

“Those chimes, those chimes of motherland
Upon a Christmas morn,
Outbreaking as the Angels did,
For a Redeemer born !
How merrily, they call afar,
To cot and baron's hall,
With holly decked, and mistletoe,
To keep the festival.”

I now sallied forth on my way to the church. Far off, in every direction, might be seen groups of families, either walking or being borne along in their sleighs towards the church. The brilliant lights from the windows shone from afar, illuming the snowy hill sides. I found an immense number gathered at the church, filling the building to its utmost capacity. I began the service. The whole immense multitude joined, with becoming rever-

ence, in the solemn service of the Episcopal Ritual. The Christmas chaunts, accompanied by the solemn tones of the organ, seemed to fall upon the ear with a sweet and delightful effect,—such as might cause the Christian heart to swell with joy for the blessed gift of a Saviour born. In the course of the sermon I spoke to my hearers of the wonderful event which they were called upon to observe. I carried their minds back to the wonderful scene, when the infant Saviour was born—to the “inn” crowded with strangers, and affording no room for the new-born babe—to the stable; oh! wonder of wonders, where he was laid to his first sleep upon a bed of straw!—to the spot where was heard, 1800 years ago, that sweet chorus of angelic voices as they sang upon the midnight air, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will towards men.” After dwelling for some time upon the character of the event, I urged them to make a proper use of it, by embracing, at once, the glorious and wonderful redemption

which had been procured for them by the birth of Christ. "I love," continued the discourse, "to have you rejoice. Dead and dark indeed must be that soul that has no anthem of grateful praise to send up for the blessing of a Saviour's birth. I love to see these walls beautified with evergreens. They are proper tokens of rejoicing, and fitting emblems of the eternity of God the Son. It is a part of the Divine economy to make use of outward forms to express the feelings of the mind. But remember that ye might cover these temple-walls with gold, and it would prove a useless offering, unless it was accompanied with the worship and sincere affection of your hearts. Hasten then, my hearers, without delay, while you can, to render back something like an adequate return for your Saviour's condescension."

With a view of giving the reader a little insight into what was passing in the history of the parish, I have here introduced the above account of the manner in which the "Christ-

mas Eve" is observed in the country. I now proceed to resume the narrative, and lay before the reader some interesting sketches of religious character, which I was privileged to witness.

Among the groups of houses, before referred to, I used often to stop at the house of an excellent and pious parishioner, who lived in that retired and secluded part of the town. Her humble dwelling was an old and delapidated building, presenting a comfortless air to the eye of the beholder. But, to the Christian, there was something within that humble dwelling, which gave it a value of infinite worth—far above that of the gay palaces of the rich votaries of the world. After all, I often think of how little consequence it is how we live in this world, for of what avail will be all our gay and expensive dresses, and furniture, and splendid equipage, when we come to die. In the heavenly paradise, that flower which shall bloom brightest and most beautiful, may be from the humble plant that was nursed in ad-

versity and penury, and smitten by the rudest blasts of earthly misfortune. It was somewhat thus with her to whom I have just alluded. She lived in humble circumstances, and had seen misfortunes, but she did not complain. She rather thanked God, that in love he had chastened her; since, if he had allowed her to glide smoothly down the stream of prosperity, she might have never been weaned from the world, and led to choose the upper path that leads to glory. How many can thus bless God for afflictions! Reader, do not murmur and repine when God's hand lies heavy upon you, and you meet with some sudden trial; for, had it not been for trial, you might never have been humbled under a sense of your sinful condition, and brought a penitent believer to the foot of the Cross. The individual just referred to, had a rich experience in spiritual and divine things. She evidently lived a life of faith and prayer. Her influence in the family was good. She brought up her children in the faith and fear of God. Her seat at the church was

never vacant, unless from necessity. Her daughter partook largely of the spirit of the mother. Oh! what precious encouragement is there for mothers to labor for the spiritual good of their children! Early maternal instruction scarce ever fails of success. The precious seed, sown by a mother's fond care, upon the mellow soil of her child's heart, though it may lie dormant awhile, will yet spring up in due time, and yield a rich and glorious harvest. The daughter married a young man of good and industrious habits. He was a strictly moral person, but he was not a professing Christian. His wife, however, sought, with a faithful tenderness, to lead him on in the heavenly path which she trod. Her labors were blessed. He became a sincere, devoted disciple of Christ. I visited him—gave him religious instruction, and pastoral advice, and the result was, that he soon joined our little church, and has since proved a most useful member of the parish.

Not a great way off from the spot before spoken of, there resided another interesting young woman, of devoted Christian character. When I first saw her, she had been an invalid for many years, and had been, now for a long time, confined to her sick bed. I was first attracted by her sweet and amiable temper. Always cheerful, always happy, and never disposed to repine—it was a pleasure to visit this young Christian, and behold how, under all her dispensations, she could throw over all the sunshine of her smiles. Nothing but the grace of God can thus enable us to maintain a serene and placid frame under all circumstances in which we may be placed in this world of trial. When I first saw her, she looked pale and emaciated, she had lost pretty much the use of her limbs; and, to all appearances, seemed fast hastening towards that bright world, where all the disciples of Jesus, freed from sickness and sorrow, unite in ascribing worship and glory to him who bought them by his blood, and hath redeemed them out of every kindred, and

tongue, and nation. But it pleased a gracious God to order otherwise. In a few months, under the skilful care and treatment of a physician, she recovered, to the great astonishment of all her friends, so as to be able to walk and ride. She still continued to improve in health, and soon so far recovered as to be able to attend upon the services of God's house. I never can forget the look of happiness and sweet satisfaction that overspread her countenance as she appeared, for the first time, in that holy place, and joined in the sacred worship, and sang, once more, the sweet hymns of our Book of Common Prayer. If ever tears of thankful joy were shed, I believe it was at that time.

Alas! how many are strangers to that joy! How many little prize the precious privilege of going up to the house of God. Not so the person whose history we are now sketching. She rejoiced that she was once again enabled, by the goodness of God, to enter within his

holy courts, and there offer up to him the sincere worship of a thankful heart.

* * * * *

The writer feels that this narrative of religious character would be incomplete did he not also add one more brief portrait of a departed Christian wife and mother, Mrs. ——. So much time and space have now been given to these delineations of Christian character, that I must reserve this for another and concluding chapter.

One word to the reader, before we conclude. The history of the two individuals just described, shows you, my reader, what divine grace is adequate to do for the soul. It teaches you how true religion, as inculcated in the Word of God, is adequate to change our nature—to spread heavenly peace and tranquility over the soul—and that those afflictions, at which we are so prone to repine, may, in the end, only serve to bring us nearer to God. Ponder on these truths, and if, you are afflicted—if sickness or calamity in any form assails

you—do not despair. Read over again and again, the precious promises of God's Word. They will give hope to your desponding heart. Go on, faithful to your Christian duties, unto death, and God shall bring you at length to his heavenly kingdom.

CHAPTER IV.

Sketches of religious character, continued.—History of Mrs. —; her character; Visits to her house.—Reflections.—The Author's conclusion of his narrative.—Farewell to the Parish.

It is a delightful task to recall pleasant memories of those we once knew, and with whom we have enjoyed sweet communion and sacred Christian fellowship, in days that are past. Perhaps no one enjoys a better opportunity of intercourse and communion with those of exalted Christian character and spiritual worth than the Pastor of a people. As he goes forth, from day to day, mingling with his parishioners, visiting their homes and firesides,

in seasons of sickness as well as health, prosperity, and adversity, he has the most ample opportunity of beholding the happy effect of that religion which he inculcates, in molding after a heavenly pattern, the lives of his people. The writer can truly say that he has enjoyed many such valuable opportunities of witnessing the development of Christian character ; and has learned therefrom many most delightful lessons of faith, hope, and trust, in God.

Among instances of this kind I can now recall the history of Mrs. —, who was a most constant and devoted attendant upon my church. She was one of those pure spiritual-minded Christians, with whom it is always most profitable and delightful to meet. Her early religious training had been under the ministry of the late sainted Milnor, of New York ; and there her mind was doubtless first imbued with the influence of that religion, whose sustaining power and hopes she ever afterwards enjoyed. Amid the changes and trials which she met

with, being often in feeble health, her piety continued to shine out in her life, diffusing hope and serenity upon her soul. Amid all the storms of life, faith continued to grow strong and rise upward, like the drooping flower when smitten by the blast.

“ Real faith is like the sun’s fair flower,
Which, midst the clouds that shroud it, and the winds
That wave it to and fro, and all the changes
Of air, and earth, and sky, doth rear its head,
And looketh up, still steadfast to its God.”

Yes! how often (and memory loves to recall it) have I stopped at her welcome abode! It was a large farm-house, situated on a high hill, embosomed in the foliage of several tall trees, whose far-spreading branches cast a cool shade over the spot, intercepting the sun’s oppressive rays. There I have sat many a pleasant hour, holding pleasant intercourse with this interesting family, consisting of father, mother, and two young daughters. It was delightful, in deed, to sit there and enjoy the interesting society of this kind family—to listen to the

mother, as she conversed with so much fluency upon the great themes of religion, which lay so near to her heart. At such times, her enquiries were eager upon the spiritual condition of the parish. She always took a deep and absorbing interest in its prosperity. And not only so, but in her family she strove, by every maternal art and endearment, to win their affections to the service of Christ. Her efforts and prayers in their behalf have not been fruitless. She enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing both unite with her in the hope and faith of the Gospel.

That mother has now gone, there is every reason to believe, to that sinless and sorrowless world, where the saints of God, clad in celestial raiment, and with golden harps in their hands, are ever swelling the praises of the Lamb. How changed must now be that well-remembered home, where I so often visited and held delightful converse with its inmates! She, who was once its light and chief attraction, is gone, no more to enter there!

She has gone to a better land, and is no longer a sorrowing pilgrim of earth. She sleeps in the village burial-ground, and has left a shining track behind her. The radiance of hope, I doubt not, shone upon her countenance, and the peace of God animated her soul, as she winged her flight towards the celestial paradise. I never expect to meet her again on these earthly shores, but, should I hereafter be so happy as to enter the fields of paradise, I shall expect to renew my earthly friendships, and, among them, I doubt not that I shall recognize there, my sainted friend and beloved parishioner.

Reader, thou hast been with me to the grave of a child of God. Would'st thou, like her, die in peace and the hope of Heaven—imitate her example, cherish the same faith, live the same life of prayer and devotion, and then shall you, like her, die the the death of the righteous.

I must now bring these few memorials to a close. After laboring in this pleasant field of

the Lord's vineyard for the space of two years, in consequence of declining health, I felt under the necessity of freeing myself from the heavy care and burdensome responsibility which belong to the active duties of the ministerial office. And though the separation, I knew, would be a painful one, from a people who had shown me such unremitting kindness, and from scenes, now endeared to me by many fond recollections, and the countenances of those I loved so well, among whom I had labored, not without some happy results; yet I knew it was necessary, and I must bow to the will of Providence, who ordereth all things aright.

* * * * *

And now, I must bid farewell to you, my beloved parish. It is evening. The steamer has just come up to the wharf. The last bell has rung. I have shaken hands, for perhaps the last time, with many of my warm-hearted friends and beloved parishioners; and now I must hasten to take the boat. She quickly recedes from the wharf; and as I stand upon

her deck, I see many an anxious eye watching me, and waving a parting signal. I see the window of my study as it begins to fade out of my sight, and the church spire on the hill top, where we have so often communed with God in prayer. Farewell! ye temple-walls, which have so often re-echoed the praises of our God! Farewell! ye peaceful homes, at whose fire-sides I have so often sat, and talked on heavenly things! Farewell! ye little children of the Sunday-School, whose sweet countenances have so often looked smilingly on me, as I have tried to lead you along the Lord's pastures! May we all meet together, a united parish, in Heaven!

XV.

Maternal Instruction; or, a Walk in the Village Burying-Ground.

IT was late in the afternoon of a lovely Sabbath day in June, that Mrs. Nelson, accompanied by her son, William, set out upon a short walk to the village burying-ground.

Never did Nature wear a more lovely or inviting aspect. The fields were carpeted in the richest green, while groups of the most fragrant blossoms hung from the trees, and filled the air with their sweet odor. The scenery, too, which stretched around on every hand was sublime and beautiful beyond description. The village, with its neat, white dwellings, stood

upon a gentle eminence, overlooking a beautiful valley, through which flowed the majestic river H——. Beyond, the forest-clad mountains rose in graceful succession, until their blue summits mingled with the skies.

In viewing these charming prospects, Mrs. Nelson was often led to adore the wisdom and goodness of that Being, who “clothes the grass,” and “arrays in all their glory the lilies of the field.” And many a time has she sought to impress upon the tender hearts of her children, the instructive lessons which they conveyed to her mind.

“Mother, how beautiful everything looks,” said William. “What a bright green covers the fields; and then, how pretty the river looks, as it winds through the valley.”

“Yes, my dear,” replied Mrs. Nelson, “every thing looks beautiful indeed. We cannot turn our eyes in any direction without beholding something to excite our wonder and delight; and this should teach us,” continued Mrs. Nelson, “how good our Heavenly Father is. As

we view those sweet prospects around us, and are led to admire their beauty and variety, let us ever trace in them his hand working for our comfort and happiness."

In a few moments William and his mother were at the burying-ground. It was enclosed by a stone wall, and an iron gate occupied the entrance. They had not proceeded far among the tombstones before the attention of William was arrested by a small slab of white marble, recording the death of a little boy.

"Oh! mother, look here," said William, "there is a tombstone of a little boy, who died only one year younger than I am. 'Joseph Sandford, aged twelve years and three days.' And there are some pretty lines at the bottom of the stone. I will read them to you, mother:

'No more, O pale destroyer, boast
Thy universal sway;
To heaven-born souls thy sting is lost,
Thy night—the gate of day.'

Mother, do you know anything about this little boy?"

“ Yes, William, I do. He was a brother of Miss Louisa Sandford, who, you know, often visits our house. He died when you were quite an infant.”

“ And did he die happy, mother ?” enquired William.

“ Yes, my dear boy, he did ; for he was truly pious. Oh ! how he loved his Bible and his Saviour ! I often visited him during his sickness, and frequently have I found him, during paroxysms of pain, repeating the hymns which his mother had taught him. Ah ! my dear boy, you may rest assured that there is nothing like religion to make us happy and prepared to meet death with composure. In the words of that little hymn :—

‘ ’Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live ;
’Tis religion can supply
Solid comfort when we die.’ ”

William looked very steadfast in his mother’s face while she gave this brief account of little Joseph ; and then, with a thoughtful

air, he observed: "I used to think, mother, that little children never could become religious; but now I think very differently. I have read so many accounts of children, who became pious at a very early age, and died so very happy. And then the case of little Joseph, too, is another proof that young children may become truly pious. Is it not so, mother?"

"Your opinion is perfectly correct, William, and I rejoice that you have been led to think as you do. There is one more example of youthful piety, which well deserves your attention. It is that of little Nathan Dickerman, who, you know, died at Boston, at the early age of nine years. And, oh! what a bright and lovely example it was! May you strive to imitate it more and more, my dear boy. Little do I care to see your brow decked with the empty laurels of fame, honor, or wealth; for how quickly will these fade away when, like little Nathan, you are called to die. Nothing will then afford you any comfort but the everlasting hopes and consoling promises of

religion. With these to sustain us, we can walk through the dark valley, as did little Nathan, calm and serene, looking forward to that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God."

Mrs. Nelson and William had now spent much time in walking among the tombs, and reading over the affecting records inscribed upon them. The sun was already fast declining in the western horizon, casting the lengthened shadows of numerous intervening objects over the ground. They both stood for some moments, watching its departing glories, until, as they emerged from the burying-ground, a rich flood of golden, mellow light burst upward, and spread itself over the sky, in all directions.

"Mother," said William, "only look at those beautiful clouds in the west. Their edges seem as if they were tinged with gold. May not they also be said to afford another evidence of the goodness of God?"

"Yes, my dear child, they most undoubtedly

do, and ought we not to praise Him, in whose works we find so much to call forth our admiration and delight?"

"Oh, yes, mother, I think we certainly ought. I have often wondered how any one can be an infidel. Is it not very strange, mother?"

"It is, William—very strange, indeed, that any one can live amidst so many plain evidences of Divine goodness and power, and yet be insensible to them. Proud and stubborn, indeed, must be the heart of the infidel. Poor creatures! they little think how they wrong their own souls. On some clear winter evening, William, have you never noticed the vault of Heaven, as you have stood gazing with delight upon the beautiful bright moon, as she rode along in silent majesty; or the mild, silver planets, or the twinkling stars in far-distant expanse—have you not thought within yourself, how glorious and powerful must be that Being who created them all? And have you not been constrained to praise

Him? And as you have witnessed that wonderful change, by which the earth, deadened by the frosts of a long winter, becomes in a short time clothed in all the delightful verdure of spring, has not your heart been filled with an almost overpowering sense of the goodness of God towards you? And have you not, again, felt that He was worthy of your soul's highest adoration? But, I see it is growing dark, now, William—let us run back and tell father what a pleasant walk we have had."

XVI.

Thoughts on Heaven.

HEN we turn our thoughts to this deeply interesting subject, we naturally are disposed first to look into the grounds and evidence by which our belief in a future state of endless happiness is supported. We look at man—we see him now in all his pride and glory—we behold his flashing eye, his unbent strength, his countenance beaming with life and gladness. But soon we see him prostrated with sickness. We behold his noble form laid low; disease preys with wasting power upon him, and he sinks away and dies—his body crumbles to

dust. We eagerly ask the question, what has become of him? Does he yet live?

To solve these interesting enquiries, we may gather much interesting and deeply important evidence from the consideration of the nature of the soul itself. Has not the Creator stamped the impress and persuasion of immortality upon the soul itself? What means that principle so deeply imbedded within us, that seems to recoil back at the the thought of annihilation?

“ Why sinks the soul back on herself,
And startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us,
And points out a hereafter.”

Why is it that yon poor savage is always anticipating a green and blooming island across the deep? Who taught the savage that? Then, too, when we behold a Christian upon the verge of the grave, his body fast hastening to ruin, but the soul triumphant and exultant, manifesting a vigor and brilliancy of thought, as if the beams from the sun of eternity were

already beginning to shine upon it, do we not behold in such a scene, the most striking evidence of the soul's immortality?—"that the inhabitant, good or evil, does not expire when the house goes to ruin—that the jewel, redeemed or lost, is not destroyed when the casket is broken up?" But when we come to add to this the testimony which Scripture furnishes, how strong and overwhelming becomes the proof of a future happy state of being! We turn to the Book of God, and there we can plant our hope—firm and stable as God's throne. "Because I live, ye shall live also." Do we want stronger proof than that which is afforded by Christ's own declaration? Again, it is written, "all they that are in their graves *shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.* They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life—they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation;" and once more, "I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Surely we may gather from these words proof uncon-

trovertible of the existence of a world of unalloyed happiness beyond this life. Since "Jesus hath arisen, the first fruits of them that slept," we know for a certainty that when our friends die they are not lost, but will come forth at last with all the innumerable hosts of the dead. And now that we have proof that there is to be such a place as we call Heaven, the next enquiry which suggests itself would seem to be, What kind of a place is Heaven? and, Where is it? Let us endeavor to throw some light upon these exceedingly interesting subjects.

First,—What kind of place will heaven be? I answer,

1. *It will be a holy place.*

It is written that the "pure in heart shall see God;" and again, "There shall enter into it nothing that defileth." It is a place adapted only for such as have been renewed by the sanctifying grace of God. How forbidding the thought that in heaven one serene brow should ever be disturbed with the cares of

guilt, or one soul ever be agitated by the tempest of passion. It must be a pure and holy place, where a God of infinite purity is enthroned among his heavenly hierarchies. Unsanctified feet will never be able to tread those courts. Eyes that are impure will never be able to gaze on its beauty and loveliness. He who would aspire to that holy place must expect to leave all his sin and pollution behind him.

2. It may be observed of Heaven also, *that it will be an active place.*

We all know from experience that to be exempt from labor in this world is misery. It will doubtless be so there. How do the Scriptures describe the holy beings of another world? Do they speak of them as in a condition of inglorious ease and idleness? Far from it. The angels and glorified inhabitants of that world are described as serving God day and night in his Temple. Never does the song of the radiant band cease to pour over the heavenly battlements of the New Jerusa-

lem, "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Think not then, kind reader, than when the suffering child of earth shall at length be gathered into those heavenly realms of joy, that he will be an idler there. Oh, no! for the saints of that mighty assembly will find in Jesus and his redemption themes glorious and expansive enough to occupy an eternity of thought, of praise, and thanksgiving.

3. *Heaven will be a social place.*

Its Inhabitants will not be isolated beings, having no communion nor fellowship. This would be contrary to our nature. We love to mingle with friends and kindred. We are social beings, and this constitutes a great portion of our happiness. And will not Heaven too be a social place? Oh, yes! How great, how glorious will be the associates with whom we shall then mingle in delighted fellowship! Here our earthly friends soon die and are lost to us.

“ Friend after friend departs—
Who hath not lost a friend ?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end.”

But in Heaven how different. There the sacred ties of friendship shall be reunited, never more to be broken. Yet again—

4. It may be said of Heaven, that *it will be a place free from sin and sorrow.*

This world is at best but a scene of trial and suffering. We see it on every hand. Look, for example, at yonder dwelling, within it—though adorned with every luxury and comfort which earth can give, there sits a lonely, widowed, grief-stricken mother. Oh ! how many sad and lonely hours has that mother sat, beside her lonely hearthstone, in sadness and tears, recalling the images of her lost husband and child ? But in that blessed land to come there shall be no more death. Its inhabitants live on in undecaying vigor. Is there not something exceedingly bright and cheering in this view of Heaven ? Does it not

seem to pour the glad rays of sunshine and hope upon the lone pathway of God's afflicted ones here? Once more—

5. May we not also consider *Heaven to be a material abode.*

It is a question sometimes discussed by divines, whether heaven be a material residence or no. Many regarding it only in a spiritual point of view, are apt to look at it as a residence for spirits only; but I think it may be doubted whether, constituted as we are, it is even possible for us to form in our minds any distinct, tangible idea of Heaven, without attaching to it something of a material nature. We know from God's Word, that man in his future state will consist of a soul residing in a corporeal frame—that he will possess a complex nature, consisting of spirit and substance. If this be so, then he must have a home—some place to reside in, suited to his corporeal frame—not a lofty ærial region, where spirits float in ether, or are mysteriously suspended upon nothing. It seems reasonable, then, to

suppose that he will hereafter exist in a material abode—that he will have ground to walk upon—scenes of luxuriant beauty and loveliness to delight his senses.

We do not undertake to say where the locality of Heaven may be. It may be in some glorious world above us. It may be (an hypotheses supported by considerable Scripture testimony, and advocated by many learned divines) that the earth upon which we now tread, being purified by fire, and redeemed from the curse of sin, shall become at length the saints' final home. It seems to me, I must say, that if we could adopt this view of Heaven, it would be far more tangible—more consonant to our feelings—more consolatory. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." "Nevertheless," adds the Apostle, "we, according to

His promise, look for a new Heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

These words have been supposed by divines to teach the sentiment already expressed, that this world of sin and suffering is to be at last overtaken by fire, and thus purified, will become the dwelling place of righteousness. If the Apostle's words are to be taken in their literal sense, they may justly be considered to bear such an interpretation. Then, again, when we look at this world as being the place of man's nativity—his redemption—his discipline and training for Heaven—as being the scene where the Son of God tarried—where He was baptized—where He suffered and died—does it look probable or reasonable that a world, thus signalized by occurrences the most wonderful, is to be finally given up to Satan, or blotted out of being? It is not the economy of God to annihilate anything which He has made. Matter is ever changing its form, but never is it lost or annihilated. Why not then suppose that this fair world, redeemed from the

curse, will be the future Heaven. Take away sin, and what spot can be more beautiful ;—take away sin, and the landscape shall once more bloom with flowers, such as they were in their pristine beauty, before the fall. God's glory shall shine out in every tree, plant and flower. Christ shall here dwell with the saints, and they shall partake of the tree of life. We do not desire, however, to press this view of the subject, interesting as it is, upon our readers. We would not go farther than reason and Scripture would warrant. However beautiful and consoling, and consonant to our long-cherished habits of thinking, such a view of Heaven may be, yet, it is not necessary that our minds should be limited to this idea alone.

Let the locality of Heaven be where it may, we may be assured that it will be a happy abode, an inconceivably desirable prize for us to obtain, an untold bliss for us to enjoy. We may not now, perhaps, in this present stage of weakness and imperfection, be able to form an

adequate judgment as to what Heaven will actually be. It is something with us as it is with a mariner. Long before he enters the harbor he climbs to the mast-head, and sees from afar the beacon lights shining through the dim shadows of the night, as they reveal themselves along the coast. But he sees not the city as yet, with its tall spires and noble palaces. No; when the light of a morning sun shall have arisen upon the world, and dissipated the night and shadows, then will he behold the glorious city, and ride safely into its port. So the Christian sees not, as yet, the fair and glorious inheritance—the magnificent city of the Great King. He sees only as he climbs the heights of faith and prayer, the few glimmering lights from the Word of God, shining out to his eye along the coasts of time; and, by-and-by, when the night shades of death shall have rolled away—then, by the daylight of eternity, shall he be able to see, with his own eyes, the beatific vision.

Reader, God has given you enough light on

this interesting and all-important subject to show you how sublime is the destiny which awaits you, and how great things you can accomplish for yourself. Oh! as you value your soul's welfare, spend not all your noble desires and aspirations in treasuring up the poor short-lived honors and wealth of this world. Far better would it be to live here upon a pallet of straw and be a child of God, and receive at last a welcome into the heavenly Paradise, than to live here in short-lived luxury amid the grandeur of a palace, only to awake at last to shame and remorse!

XVII.

The Promises.

NO person of thoughtful mind but must sometimes have reflected, during his leisure moments, upon the wonderful adaptation of the Word of God, to the circumstances of fallen beings. If that Divine book had been addressed only to pure, unfallen angels, it would probably have been filled with gorgeous descriptions of the Divine glory and splendor, and would have contained little that was applicable to the guilty—to those exposed to wrath—to those subject to grief and suffering. It would have been absorbed, to a great extent, with those

deeper and more intricate mysteries of our religion, rather than have been occupied with the unceasing proofs of God's tenderness and love. It is this fact, that that blessed volume is so taken up with assurances of God's love, so exquisitely calculated to minister comfort and composure to our sad and aching hearts, that we prize it far above all other books, and clasp it to our hearts, as that which we would not part with, though deprived of all things else. Independently of the one great fact, with which the Scriptures are so much occupied—the death and vicarious atonement of a Divine Saviour, we know that there are scattered all over its sacred pages the most animating and sustaining promises—promises whose lustre is sufficient to gild earth's darkest night of sorrow and affliction with the beams of heavenly hope and joy. Oh! how richly, and with what profusion are these promises scattered over the pages of Divine inspiration. Like the rich clusters of stars, shining out with undimmed brilliance upon a midnight sky, so

do these promises of God's Word shine pure and bright over the Christian's pathway to immortality. Clouds may sometimes rise, and momentarily obscure them, but the clouds soon pass away, and leave the stars still shining on in all their undimmed lustre. It is so with God's promises. They are sometimes hidden for a moment by the mists of doubt and unbelief, but these soon pass away, and leave the promises of God still shining on our pathway.

How few of us prize these glorious and blessed promises as we ought! How little do we realise their worth and preciousness! We think much of the earthly promises made between man and man. We feel sad and disappointed when these are not realized, and when they are fulfilled, how does it send a thrill of pleasure through our souls? How much more ought the exceeding great and precious promises of God Almighty to absorb our heart's best affections—promises which will stand and be realized in all their unspeakable blessedness

when this world is laid in ashes! God be thanked, that while they are so lightly regarded by many, there are yet others who do appreciate them who are supported and sustained by them, and borne on heaven-ward by their power. They feel that they are indebted to them for their richest and deepest joys. In sickness they will not let them go. In sorrow they will not let them go. In death they will still cling to them for consolation and hope. And thus in many a sad and weary heart, here perhaps struggling with poverty and disease, these promises pour heavenly hope and joy. In speaking of these promises we will notice.

1. *Their origin.*

Whence do they come? Who is their author? Why these promises, so rich and precious, so varied and numerous—all come to us from God's unsparing benevolence and love. It was necessary to the plan of human salvation that God should have arched our sky all over with these promises, that they might continue to shine like the stars upon our pathway,

through every vicissitude of life, until we had reached the celestial city. We might have reached heaven through the blood of the Cross of Jesus, even though there had been not even one solitary promise hung out along our journey.

Here, in regard to matters of this life, men make promises to each other, because they are dependant upon each other ; and this requires the making of promises between them, and the fulfilling of those promises. But it is not thus with God. He is not dependant upon us. There is nothing which requires him to make any promises to us. But it is out of his own pure benevolence. Oh ! what condescension, what amazing benevolence is thus shown in such a Being as God—in that He, who created by his breath millions and millions of worlds, and who could create millions more, should stoop from his exalted glory, not only to redeem us, but to make promises for us, that we may be roused and animated to reach the heavenly prize. Oh ! what amazing condes-

cension that such a Being should do so much for us, poor miserable and unworthy sinners! God had nothing to gain by such wonderful condescension. He could add nothing to his greatness which was already infinite! No! it was not for his own sake, but it was for our sake! It was the overflowing of that exhaustless fountain of paternal love, which caused God to sow broad-cast his precious promises in such rich profusion on his divine revelation.

2. Consider next *the extent of these promises.*

So exceeding numerous and varied are they, that they seem indeed like the firmament, so crowded with stars as to glow and sparkle in one continued blaze. Listen to some of them: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "Him that overcometh will

I make a pillar in the temple of my God.”
“As thy day is so shall thy strength be.”

Such is but the smallest selection which could be made from that inexhaustible storehouse of the promises. Indeed, I can think of no condition or circumstances in life, in which we may not find some consoling and encouraging promise of Scripture, precisely adapted to our case. Here you will find promises for men of every age;—for the youth, just stepping out as it were upon the stage of life, and about to assume its responsibilities, as well as for the full-grown man of mature years, and for the aged veteran of silver hairs. Here you will find promises for those who are full of health and vigor, before whom life stands out like a picture of enchantment; and promises also for those who are reclining on a bed of sickness, and wasting away with disease;—promises for the widow, as she bends with bitter tears over the new-made grave of her departed husband; and for the mother, as she lays her lifeless babe, with the impress of its

last sweet smile, in the grave ; promises for the sad and weeping orphan, as it goes forth to meet the trials and vicissitudes of the world ; promises for the poor sailor, as he rocks on the mountain-billow, now gliding over smooth and tranquil waters, and now riding a tempestuous sea, while the masts quiver in the gale like reeds, and the winds howl through the rigging, and the ship seems almost struggling for her very life ; promises for the poor captive, as he pines away in his lonely dungeon, with scarce a ray of light gleaming through his window, as well as for the joyous and free ; promises for the saint, as he journeys on through life, and comes nearer and nearer to his final home, as well as for the poor sinner, almost sinking beneath the heavy load of his transgressions. In short, we can think of no possible condition of life in which we do not find ourselves surrounded by these promises on every side. They seem to reach everything. They cover every possible contingency of life. How wonderful is it to think how much God has done for us, in thus

scattering his rich and glorious promises over his Word, in such rich and amazing profusion ! Let us next consider briefly—

3. *The certainty of these promises.*

Upon this point, how is it possible for us to entertain a single doubt or suspicion ? There are two great pillars, which go to sustain God's promises, viz. : God's own veracity, and God's omnipotent power.

“ God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it ? hath he commanded, and shall he not bring it to pass ? ” The promises of Satan are but gilded lies, held out to deceive the simple and the unwary. Satan never made a single promise which he ever meant to keep ; since, “ he is a liar, and the father of it. ” Then, again, how extremely precarious oftentimes is the promise between man and man. He sometimes makes a promise to-day, and to-morrow, perhaps, forgets he ever made any such promise. Why ? Because he is but a poor, imperfect being ; his memory is

weak, or perhaps he finds afterwards his disposition and circumstances changing, and hence he fails to fulfil his promise.

Not so with God. His memory is not weak. No; God has no memory. This would be to make him out a finite being like ourselves. To God every thing past, present, and future constitute but one eternal now; and as He is unchangeable, none of his promises can fail. But this is not all, God is omnipotent also. He is perfectly able to accomplish whatever he says, and hence you see it is impossible that one of his everlasting promises can fail; "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." There is abundant reason to believe, then, that all God's promises will most surely be fulfilled. God's veracity is pledged, and his own omnipotent power is adequate to do it. Oh! what a sure ground of comfort and consolation is here. Here you may place your firm and undoubting trust, and feel that you will never be disappointed. He who places implicit confidence in God's gra-

cious promises—what has he to fear? May he not take up the words of the Prophet, and say: “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom; neither shall fruit be on the vine: though the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat: though the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the God of my salvation.”

Reader, take your Bible, read over, again and again, these wonderful promises. Say not in your despondency: “Oh! this is too great a promise for me.” Yield not to weak fears and doubts. Be not faithless, but believing. Take God at his word, and rely implicitly upon his truth and God shall uphold and sustain you, and bring you at length, when the tempestuous voyage of life is over, into the quiet haven of eternal rest.

“Soon, and forever,
The breaking of day
Shall drive all the night clouds
Of sorrow away.

"Soon, and forever,
We'll see as we're seen,
And learn the deep meaning
Of things that have been.

"When fighting without us,
And fears from within
Shall weary no more
In the warfare of sin.

"Where tears, and where fears,
And where death shall be never,
Christians with Christ shall be,
Soon, and forever.

"Soon, and forever,
The work shall be done—
The warfare accomplished—
The victory won.

"Then, droop not in sorrow—
Despond not in fear—
A glorious to-morrow
Is bright'ning, and near."

XVIII.

Family Instruction; or, Evening Conversations upon the Antiquities of Egypt.

CONVERSATION I.

THE PYRAMIDS.

IT was evening. The family of the Johnsons—consisting of William, a fine rosy-cheeked boy of thirteen, and Mary, his little sister, just entering upon her tenth year—together with their father and mother, both pious and excellent people—were all seated around their happy fire-side. For some time a quiet stillness had been maintained throughout the group, when William, casting his eyes upward into his father's countenance, with a look of eager anticipation, said: "Fa-

ther, oh! how I wish you would tell me something about that wonderful country of which I have been reading to-day?"

"What country do you mean, my son?" inquired his father.

"Oh! father, I mean Egypt," replied William. "The book in which I have been reading," continued he, "tells about the crocodiles, and says also that there were pyramids in that country, father. I should very much like to know what a pyramid is?"

Mrs. Johnson, who had till then been industriously plying her needle, turning her eye upon Mr. Johnson, remarked, that she thought Egypt would furnish a subject of conversation both highly interesting and profitable. "One cannot but feel," she continued, "deeply interested in a country whose arts have served to call forth the wonder and admiration of all succeeding ages—a country, too, which once formed the cradle of the Israelites. If there were nothing else on record, this fact alone,

I am sure, would be sufficient to awaken the now eager desire to look into its history."

"I am fully aware of your opinion, my dear," said Mr. Johnson, "well do I remember the thrilling interest with which, in my youthful days, I read over the historical account of their magnificent monuments of art, gathered from the journals of various travelers. Nor has my interest in that wonderful land suffered any abatement since that period. Nothing could give me higher pleasure and satisfaction than to spend several evenings in conversation with William upon it."

"Oh! do, father," cried William.

"Most gladly do I accede to your request, my boy," said Mr. Johnson, "and seeing you have already suggested the subject, we will this evening confine our remarks to the pyramids solely. You have already inquired what a pyramid is. I will tell you. It is an immense quadrangular pile of stones, running upward, forming a broad base, and tapering off gradually to a point. Perhaps you do not under-

stand what is meant by quadrangular. I will explain it. It is a word used in mathematics, and denotes that anything to which it is applied—as a pyramid, for example—has four angles or corners, formed by the meeting together of four plain surfaces. Thus: if I take two flat or plain boards, and lay one down on the plain side, and then place the other edgewise upon it, the space or room occupied between the two will be an angle. And if I have four boards, and lay one as before, and place two edgewise upon it, and then the other two directly opposite the first, there will be four angles, will there not, William?”

“Yes, father,” replied William, “I understand now. Emmet’s monument in St. Paul’s Church-yard, New York, is a triangular pyramid, because it is formed by the meeting of four plain surfaces of stone, which run up from a very broad base, and then gradually taper off to a point. And Bunker Hill monument, near Boston, which we saw last summer, is a pyramid also, is it not, father?”

"Yes, William," replied Mr. Johnson, "I am glad to see you understand me so well. And now, that you know what a pyramid is, I suppose you will be interested to hear how, and for what the Egyptians built them."

"Certainly, father," he replied.

The quiet stillness of the hour—the clicking of the well-varnished clock behind the door, and the high-laboring winds, seemed each to invite the mind to a contemplation of scenes, now well-nigh buried in oblivion. Every eye in the room was now riveted upon Mr. Johnson, as he proceeded to observe:—

"As to the manner in which the ancient Egyptians built their pyramids, we have the testimony of a few ancient authors. They inform us that ten years were spent, first in hewing the stone from quarries, either in Arabia or Africa, and conveying it thence to the spot for building, which is on the west side of the river Nile, opposite the great city Cairo. There are three great pyramids on this spot, one of which was so immensely large as to be

reckoned among the seven wonders of the world. It is in reference to this last that I am speaking. After ten years had been spent, as already mentioned, in getting the building materials, twenty years were occupied in building the pyramid, by 100,000 men, who served each one for a period of three months, so that you perceive it must have required about thirty years to complete the structure. The stones made use of were very large, measuring from one to four feet in height, and other parts in proportion. The base of this pyramid occupies eleven acres of ground—a space as large as a good sized field—and the height of the top, according to the latest measurement, is 461 feet. Probably this is considerable less than the original height, as much sand must have accumulated about the base since the first erection of the pyramid. On one side, the successive tiers of stone were so arranged as to form steps, by which the people might mount to the top. The view then presented is very extensive, as you may easily imagine. I

remember one traveler, who visited the country very recently, says the prospect is exceedingly grand. You look below, towards the south, and there you will see the Nile, stretching along through a beautiful rich valley as far as the eye can reach. On your right, the vast, bleak desert of Africa spreads itself out before you, bounding the distant horizon, while here and there the eye rests upon crumbling tombs, pyramids and broken columns, which once formed the proud structures of the Egyptians."

"Oh!" said William, "how I wish I could stand upon the pyramids, and see all these wonderful things. Sister Mary, would it not be delightful?"

"It is a pleasant thing to think of, William," said Mary, "but I apprehend if you were to reduce the idea to practice, you would wish yourself back again beside our more delightful fireside."

"Ah! but, sister Mary, you do not understand me. I would not think of going without

father, and mother, and you too.—But, father, do tell me more about the pyramids.”

“Yes, my son, I will,” said Mr. Johnson. “I have already spoken of the manner in which they were built. It only remains that I acquaint you, so far as I am able, as to the object which induced the Egyptians to erect them. The main object, doubtless, was to provide royal sepulchres for the Egyptian kings. History informs us of many pyramids which were built by the kings themselves for this very purpose; and among them the great pyramid of which we have been speaking is enumerated. The same fact has been observed by travelers. They describe the interior as divided into several chambers, to which you gain access by a passage through an opening in the side of the pyramid. In these chambers lay the sarcophagi, or places hewn out of solid rock, of sufficient size to admit a human body. These were appropriated to the kings. Beside this there were other subordinate objects which influenced the Egyptians in raising

up these structures—such as, opportunities of making astronomical observations, the ornamenting of their largest cities, and the transmission of their fame in the mechanic arts to future ages.”

“Father,” said William, “how much pains the kings of Egypt must have taken to build for themselves sepulchres.”

“Yes, they did indeed,” replied Mr. Johnson, “but it was all in vain. For many of them were such cruel tyrants, that the people, out of hatred towards them, would not suffer them to be buried in the pyramids, but caused them to be laid in some obscure spot; or, if by chance they were so fortunate as to have their dead bodies placed there, they have afterwards been taken out by rude hands and scattered nobody knows where. In addition to what has been said, I ought also to mention that the sides of the pyramids are generally covered over with hieroglyphics, which are pictures or characters employed to denote ideas, in the same manner as the letters of the

alphabet are among us. Much time has been spent by learned men in attempting to decipher these interesting relics of antiquity. Though some light has been thrown upon the subject, yet it remains still involved in comparative darkness. And now, my boy," said Mr. Johnson, "do you think you can remember what I have been telling you about the pyramids?"

"Oh! yes, father," replied William, "I know I can. I have been so much interested in your conversation this evening, that I could not think of anything else."

"Well, my boy, I sincerely hope you will. You must always bear in mind that knowledge will be of very little benefit to you unless it be treasured up in the memory for future use. Though you may not reap advantage from so doing now, yet let me tell you the day will come, and that soon, when you will be richly repaid for all your pains; for in this way you will be furnished with many most valuable ideas for instructing and benefiting your

fellow-men. I should like to ask you a single question, Willian, before we close."

"Well, father, what is it?" inquired he.

"It is this," said Mr. Johnson. "What practical lesson may we draw from this evening's conversation?"

William thought for a moment and then answered: "I think, father, we may learn how much better it is to be employed in doing something useful, or that which will benefit our fellow-creatures."

"You answer very correctly, my son," said Mr. Johnson. "And what an important lesson that is, too. Oh! that you and I, William, and indeed every one of us, might strive to do everything in our power to spread real comfort and consolation upon those around us, instead of wasting it as these heathen people did upon vain objects. Then, though our name perish among men; though no mighty pyramid rise to bear our fame to distant ages; yet a far nobler monument will be reared for us in the hearts of good men, and our fame

shall rest upon Jesus, the enduring rock of ages, whose love will continue pure and bright when all the monuments of human pride and folly shall have been consumed."

CONVERSATION II.

THE EGYPTIAN TOMBS.

Early on the evening of —, Mr. Johnson's family were again assembled around their happy fireside. William, as usual, had seated himself close by his father's side, while Mary was looking with much eagerness upon the countenance of her cousin Louisa, who had just entered the room. The child of pious parents, Louisa had been brought up with the strictest regard to the education of her mind and heart. Both by precept and example, had she been taught the principles of conduct which are written in the Sacred volume. Mild and amiable in her deportment; sincerely pious, and revealing in her looks a certain calm

sweetness of expression, she was admired and loved by all who knew her. Though devotedly attached to her parents, she yet loved, first of all, her Bible, for it was the foundation of her hopes, and the source of her sweetest joys. Such was Louisa. Our young readers will not wonder, then, that she was a frequent and favorite visitor at the family of the Johnsons. A few moments had passed away in animated conversation between the cousins, when Mr. Johnson, turning towards William, said:—

“Last evening, my son, you remember I promised you that I would continue our conversations on Egypt. As we have already done with the pyramids, I shall take up the subject of Egyptian tombs. The ancient people of Egypt, William, have been universally known by their unexampled respect for the dead. This grew out of a very false and absurd doctrine which they held, and which formed a part of their religion, viz.: that the souls of the departed, immediately after leaving the body, entered into different animals,

such as bulls, birds, fishes, &c., and after wandering for some time from one to another, they were at length supposed to return to those bodies which they had left, and endue them with life. This is what philosophers call the doctrine of metemphsecosis, or transmigration of souls. Influenced by this doctrine, the Egyptians were led to pay distinguished honors to their dead, by building for them the most costly tombs. Many ruins of these tombs are still standing in that country, which are described by travelers as being very grand and imposing, and deserving to be reckoned among their most magnificent specimens of art."

"And what was it, father," inquired William, "which made the Egyptian tombs so splendid?"

Mr. Johnson replied, "it was the fine, solid materials, consisting of blocks of granite, chiseled out with so much exactness and beauty of proportion—the elegant paintings which adorned their walls—the fine sculptured images of their gods and goddesses, carved out upon

the sides—and sometimes the beautiful sarchophagus, composed of the purest and most transparent alabaster, which is found in the tombs of the sacred bulls.”

“Are there many tombs at present in that country,” inquired William.

“There are very many,” said Mr. Johnson. “The most of them lie in or near the great cities; as, for example, Thebes, formerly the capital of Upper Egypt. In this place it is supposed there are now not less than from eight to ten millions of what are called mummies, deposited in tombs built underground. You know, I suppose, what mummies are?”

“Oh, yes, father; they are the bodies of the ancient Egyptians, preserved almost entire by embalming. I have often seen them when mother and I visited the museum. Embalming is putting something in a dead body to preserve it from decay. But what it is they placed in them, I do not know, father.”

“It is a mixture of various spices, my son,” said Mr. Johnson.”

“I should suppose,” observed William, “the Egyptians would build their tombs near their temples; our burying-yards, you know, are near our churches.”

“They did, William, in many instances. Sometimes, however, they stood in very solitary places, as, for instance, in the edge of the great Lybian desert, or in the sides of mountains. Not unfrequently they would cut through solid rocks, in order to form sepulchral chambers, like that in which our blessed Saviour was laid by Joseph of Arimathea.”

“Father,” said William, “will you please describe one of the Egyptian tombs?”

“I will,” replied Mr. Johnson. “There is one which I am very sure you will be pleased to hear about. Making proper allowances for the changes which must have been wrought by the lapse of so many ages, it will certainly appear to have been a very splendid structure. It was discovered, only a few years since, by the famous traveler, Belzoni. The entrance hall is extremely beautiful, and communicates

by means of a door at the end with a chamber, the walls of which are covered with figures. From the chamber you descend by a staircase into another apartment of the tombs, - so highly ornamented with paintings and sculpture, that Belzoni styled it 'the hall of beauty.' Farther on is another large hall, supported by two square rows of pillars, leading to a large saloon in which is a beautiful sarcophagus of sculptured alabaster. If you place a lighted candle in it the whole becomes perfectly transparent, so that you can see through it. This tomb contains a great many chambers having numerous paintings upon the walls, which represent, in colors as fresh as if the work of yesterday, the Egyptian priests, their gods, goddesses, and sacrifices."

"But, father, all the Egyptian tombs are not so splendend as this, are they?"

"No, my son, they are not. Probably this was a royal tomb, or a tomb for some one of their sacred deities. The most splendid of the Egyptian tombs were erected by the kings,

who were able to expend immense treasures upon them. Beside, there are many of what are called catacombs, or mummy-pits, spreading over a space of many miles. These are perfectly plain, or but little ornamented."

"How delighted Belzoni must have been, father, when he discovered that beautiful tomb; must he not, father?" said William.

"He was, no doubt, William," replied Mr. Johnson, "and he had a great reason to be; for he had made a discovery which would render his name famous in after ages. But, William, I should also have mentioned that the Egyptians built tombs also for their sacred birds and crocodiles. Strange as it may appear, yet these ignorant and depraved people, notwithstanding all their skill and taste in the fine arts, fell down before birds, and bulls, and crocodiles, and paid them homage, and not only so, but they embalmed their bodies and built them very costly temples and tombs. One or two very magnificent tombs erected for the sacred bulls, the most adored of the Egyp-

tian deities, have been discovered in modern times, and whole catacombs of sacred birds. It is a painful subject on which to reflect," continued Mr. Johnson, "that the Egyptians should be guilty of such dreadful idolatry. It at once shows us, my boy, the justice of God in inflicting such severe punishments as he did upon these people. You have often read the account of the Egyptian plagues recorded in the Old Testament, which God sent upon them because they continued to hold the people of Israel in bondage, contrary to his commands; and how at last, these wicked and rebellious people, with their hard-hearted king, Pharaoh, were left struggling with their chariots and horses in the waters of the Red sea, while the children of Israel passed safely through on dry land."

"I have read over those interesting narratives, father, very frequently," said William, "and always with a fresh delight. They make me consider how thankful we ought to be, who

live in this age of the world, when the worship of the true God extensively prevails."

Thus closed another evening in this Christian and happy family. Miss Louisa, seeing that it was now quite late, and knowing that her parents would be anxious about her, kindly bade her uncle's family good night, and accompanied by William, she set out for her father's house, which was half a mile distant. As they entered the road, a clear and cloudless sky floated above, spangled with a host of brilliant luminaries. The moon in peerless majesty rode along over the blue waste, and cast a mellow and brilliant hue over the earth. To the richly-furnished mind of Louisa no scene could be presented more interesting. She gazed and pointed her cousin to one and then another, at the same time directing his mind upward to their great and glorious Maker. Soon she was in her father's dwelling, and William returned back.

CONVERSATION III.

THE TEMPLES OF EGYPT.

The house of Mr. Johnson stood embosomed in a beautiful grove of maples and locusts. A steep descent in front led down to a murmuring rivulet, over which had been thrown a foot-bridge. Many wild flowers hung their sweet blossoms over the banks of the stream, which it was Mary's highest delight to gather. After passing over the bridge, a narrow path leads you through the thick bushes into a favorite lawn. Here, upon the seats which William had caused to be made, the family were often accustomed to spend the close of a summer's day. Being seated one afternoon to enjoy the cooling shades, Mr. Johnson proposed to his son, William, to continue their evening conversations upon Egypt. He began by enquiring what subject he would like next to be introduced.

"If it be agreeable to you, father," said William, "I should like to hear you tell me

something about the temples of the ancient Egyptians."

"Very well, my son," said Mr. Johnson, "these will be worthy our attentive consideration. They hold a very important place among the splendid architectural monuments of that country. All travelers who have seen them, concur in representing their ruins as being of vast dimensions, as well as great beauty and elegance. They generally comprehend the walls, standing almost entire, a great many of the columns and granite slabs forming the structures, and several of the interior apartments remaining as they were originally, covered over with paintings and hieroglyphical pictures. Other parts of the buildings, which have fallen off through the effect of time, lie scattered over the ground, oftentimes occupying a large space."

"Which were the most renowned of the temples of Egypt, father?" inquired William

"Two of the largest and most magnificent, were those of Luxor and Carnack," replied

Mr. Johnson. "They stood upon the east side of the river Nile, in the great city of Thebes. Diodorus Siculus, a very ancient author, says that the temple of Luxor was a mile and a half in circumference, and sixty-eight feet and a half in height, and twenty-four feet thick. I will now endeavor, William, to give you some idea of the present appearance of these two structures. You must give me your closest attention."

"I will certainly do so," replied William.

"The one has a magnificent gateway, before which formerly stood two large pyramids, each eighty feet high. One of these has been removed to the city of Paris. Next you come to two statues, exposed to view from the chest upward. Passing by these you arrive at another gateway, erected upon a much larger scale than the former—two hundred feet in length, and sixty feet above the present soil. These gateways are sculptured over with renowned battle-scenes, which strike the beholder with a wonderful effect. You next enter a ruined por-

tico, of very large dimensions, from which a double row of columns, each seven in number, and twenty-two feet in circumference, and highly adorned with sculpture and hieroglyphics, led into a court-room. Then follows another portico, which is now only a mass of prostrate columns and rubbish, after which comes the sanctuary of the temple, wherein the Egyptians celebrated their mysterious and degrading worship. The second temple which I mentioned, is approached by a road, on each side of which there is a row of sphinxes."

"And what are they, father," enquired William.

"They are," said Mr. Johnson, "solid images of the human body, cut out of a species of stone called Syenite. Some of the sphinxes are broken, but many remain entire and appear as they did when the Egyptians passed by them in their sacred processions to the temples. Four very large gateways, covered with statues and sculpture, then present themselves, after which come the porticos, leading to the inner

courts and chambers, the materials of which are mostly prostrate upon the ground. This temple has twelve principal entrances—each approached through rows of sphinxes, several gateways, with an immense court in the interior supported by thirty pillars on each side, and three beautiful obelisks, together with a sanctuary lined with blocks of polished granite, and having its ceilings painted with clusters of stars upon a blue ground, and pictures of the offerings made by the Egyptians to their God Osiris.—If you have been able to follow me, William, through this long description, you will not be surprised to learn that travelers, on beholding the temple-ruins of Egypt, have been filled with wonder and admiration.”

“No, father, it is not to be wondered at; I have been astonished at your description; and if the mere description so much affects us, what overpowering sensations must be excited by the reality!”

“And what do you suppose it was, William,

which induced the Egyptians to build such grand temples?"

"I should suppose, father, it must be owing to their belief in the doctrine of the 'transmigration of souls.' It was because they held their deities sacred, as having been the residence of departed souls, that they built them these magnificent temples. Is it not so, father?"

"You are perfectly correct, my son," replied his father. "The religion of the ancient Egyptians, vile as it was, had a great hold upon their affections. And that is a fact which I think ought to teach us an important lesson. whose distinguishing privilege it is to enjoy a religion as pure and elevating as theirs was low and debasing."

"And what is that, father?" inquired William.

"It is this, William. If they could do so much for a religion which was destitute of any real comfort and solid hope, much more ought we to labor and strive for the sake of

a religion which breathes heavenly consolation, and whose truth is sealed by the blood of the Saviour.

“These poor Pagans, surrounded as they were by all the splendor of their architecture, their vast heaps of gold and silver, were yet utterly destitute of anything which deserved to be called religion. Though venerated by the people, yet they must have felt its barrenness and insufficiency.

“Suppose it were possible for you to have had your choice, either to live a poor cottager beside a Christian church, in this land of peace and happiness, or to have lived in the most prosperous days of the Egyptians, to have possessed their greatest treasures, nay, even to have been their greatest king, which would you prefer?”

“The first, father, by all means.”

Hearing the sound of the tea-bell through the thicket, the family now bent their steps homeward.

XIX.

The Lighted Valley.

DEATH, we all know, is, sooner or later, the end of all men. Look where we will, we are obliged to confess that we are mortal. Amid every variety of climate and scenery—in the halls and palaces of kings, and in the cottages of the poor, Death is ever scattering the trophies of its iron tyranny. Everywhere does it rear the monumental marble, beside which human affection lingers and weeps. We all know that we must die—but how difficult for us to realize this truth as we ought! We are very apt to think that all others are mortal except ourselves. Still, the truth stares us in the face,

and daily observation confirms it—"It is appointed unto all men once to die." In the long, dark procession, which began at the closed gates of paradise, and which has ever since been marching onward with slow and sure steps to the grave, we behold patriarchs—kings, from their thrones—judges, from their tribunals—beggars, princes, infants—all ranks, conditions and ages. It is in vain for any of us to close our eyes to the fact, which is unalterable—"It is appointed unto *all* to die."

In view of this absolute certainty of death, we may well turn our thoughts, kind reader, for a few moments, to some of the supports and consolations which the Gospel of Christ offers. And—

1. Let us remember that at death, we *yield up our souls into the hands of a sympathizing and all-powerful Redeemer.*

There is great consolation in this idea. Will not Jesus, who created and redeemed each of our souls, aid and sustain them in the final conflict? Oh, yes! You, who look forward with

trembling to your final departure, may gather courage when you consider that He, into whose hands you commit yourselves at the trying hour of death, is *Jesus*—that *same Jesus* who died for the guilty and the rebellious—who purchased our souls with his own precious blood. Did he give his own precious life a ransom for our souls, and will he not still be with them in death? Did he identify himself with our woes and our miseries—our weakness and our wants, here below? Did he drink to the dregs our bitter cup, and will he forsake his work? No. If he loved us enough to die for us, he will love us to the end. Besides, Christ, to whom we yield up our spirits, is nothing less than God:—*that God* who created the sun, moon and stars—*that God* who saw the universe, and spoke it into being. He has all power in Heaven and upon earth. Would you appeal to sinful dust and ashes for aid? Would you look to the outstretched arm of human friendship and affection? I would not throw any disparagement over the kind sympa-

thies of earthly friends. Love may watch by our bed of suffering—she may extend her kind hand, and speak words of soothing comfort—but Jesus can alone calm our fears, and spread a sweet peace and a hallowed serenity over our last moments. “Jesus died for me,” says the Christian, “I can therefore die in peace.” Ah! *here* is comfort—*here* is hope.

Again—

2. *The sure promise of a resurrection, and the hope of happiness beyond the grave, constitute a great antidote to death.*

Yes; Christianity teaches us the inspiring truth which should fill our souls with comfort, and assuage and serve greatly to soften the terrors of death—that when a Christian dies, he leaves a communion on earth, to which belong a thousand varied sorrows and infirmities, and sufferings, for a communion and fellowship of the saints, which is bright and endless, and sorrowless. She assures us that when we part here, it is only to meet upon that happy shore, where death and suffering come not. As the

dying believer moves along the upward-rising path to immortality, the towers and radiant glories of the New Jerusalem break on his waiting vision! Angels and saints beckon him upward to join their companionship, and harps and strains of celestial music unite to swell the endless triumph in Heaven!

"In vain may fancy strive to paint
The moment after death—
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.

"One gentle sigh their fetters break—
We scarce can say they're gone,
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne.

"Faith strives, but all its efforts fail
To trace her in her flight;
No eye can pierce within the veil,
Which hides that world of light.

"Thus much, and this from God, we know
They are completely blessed;—
Have done with sin, and care, and woe,
And with their Saviour rest."

That the dying Christian is thus most powerfully sustained and comforted in the hour of death, is made apparent by the records of experience. How often do we meet with instances of tranquil composure on a dying bed, which plainly shows us that God does not forsake his children in the hour of suffering and affliction, but mercifully sustains them. There *is a light shining in the dark valley* while Christ bears the dying believer in safety across the flood, to the shores of the promised Canaan. It fell to the lot of the writer to witness such an exemplification of the power of Christianity in the death of a Christian wife, mother, and a near relative of his own, during the autumn of 185—. She resided in the centre of a delightful village, in New England. Her dwelling was embowered in the foliage of many tall graceful elms, giving it a picturesque and inviting aspect. Altogether it was indeed a delightful spot. On every side stretched a rich and well cultivated country. Here you may see the village church and school-house, and

there the cottages of the villagers, lining the road on either side. It was there that I often visited in the days of childhood. Then, oh! how I loved to sit around the capacious hearthstone of that dwelling in those days now long since passed away, and mingle in happy intercourse with this family. How I loved to walk through the shaded and flowery walks of its large garden, to pluck the delicious peaches from its trees, or to sit beneath those tall old elms at the calm sweet hour of evening twilight, inhaling the odor from the blossoms. For many years the smiles of a gracious Providence had rested upon that dwelling. Its inmates had enjoyed, for many years, sweet and uninterrupted communion with each other. But the Christian's path is not always irradiated with sunshine. Affliction comes sooner or later, and suddenly throws a dark cloud over the domestic household. It was thus in the case before us. It pleased God to lay his afflictive hand upon that once happy dwelling. The mother, the chief light and attraction of

that home, a cheerful, kind, social neighbor and friend, was overtaken by a disease, which, baffling all medical skill, rapidly came to a crisis, and soon removed her from the scenes of the living. She seemed to be impressed, from the very first, that this would be her last sickness, yet she was wonderfully calm, and expressed the most undoubting confidence that Christ, to whom she had early dedicated herself, would sustain her in death. Said she: "*I have always trusted in God, and He sustains me.*" At another time she desired that affecting hymn to be read to her :

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

Suppose you come to a valley before day-break, all below is filled with darkness; a heavy mist and vapour have settled down upon its bosom. But the morning sun rises upon the mountains, and as it throws its kindling beams down into its recesses, how it scatters the mists and night shades, and clothes that valley with

golden sunlight. Are you afraid now to descend into that valley? Oh, no!

It is thus with death's dark valley, when illumined by the golden sunlight of God's promises. These dissipate the gloom. These irradiate the darkness. Now, the Christian can step down into that valley calm and serene.

Or, suppose a mother walks abroad on a dark stormy night, with her child. She looks into its calm and sweet face, and says: "My child, are you not afraid? The night is dark and stormy, and besides we are all alone." "No, mother," replies the child, "I am not afraid. So long as you are with me I can confide in you."

So the Christian can look up to that heavenly Parent in whom he confides, and say: "I am not afraid. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'"

So was it with her whose history I am here

dwelling upon. She did not fear to enter the dark valley, since it was lighted with the radiant presence of Jesus. "I can trust in God, and he sustains me." So said this departed servant of Jesus.

And now, I doubt not, she is walking on the sunlit shores of the Heavenly Canaan. Two days after, I attended her funeral. It was a lovely day in autumn. A quiet stillness reigned around. The foliage of the trees was as yet unusually thick, rich and beautiful, while the sun was throwing his effulgent beams upon the luxuriant landscape.

The known worth and excellent character of the deceased, had drawn together a large concourse at the house, to improve the sad event. Here a sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. —, which gave an interesting sketch of the character of the departed. We proceeded thence to the burial-ground, which is an old and spacious one, near the village, well filled with graves. And there, after the sublime service for the burial of the dead, we

committed to the earth the body of our departed sister, to await the resurrection. Thus was the veil of separation drawn for a season. She is gone, no more to be seen here below, but she will doubtless be seen again at the right hand of God, in the great and final day. As I left the grave, I could not but feel that God had gathered home another one of his dear children; and as I wended my way back toward my home, I felt there was an appropriateness to her case of the following lines:—

“Hath not thy voice been here amongst us heard!

And that deep soul of gentleness and power—

Have we not felt its breath in every word

Wont from thy lips, as Hermon's dew to shower!

Yes! in our hearts thy fervent thoughts have burned,

Of Heaven they were, and thither are returned.”

—MRS. HEMANS.

Reader, you perceive in the foregoing narrative evidence that Christianity is adequate to sustain and comfort a dying Christian. To a well-prepared servant of God, death is but the angel who comes to strike off his earthly

fetters, to open the prison doors and admit him to the glorious freedom of immortality. 'Tis then he shakes off the burden of earth's sorrows and anguish, and flies, on soaring pinions, to "the city of the living God," to "the heavenly Jerusalem," to "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." May such be your happy experience. And if in this unpretending volume, whose pages I now bring to a close, you may chance to find something that shall minister to your moral and intellectual gratification and improvement, and, above all, serve to guide your wandering feet in the pathway to Heaven, the author will feel that he has not labored in vain. And now with the hope, kind reader, that while you strive to make a right use of the present world, you will not neglect to lay up for yourselves a treasure in Heaven, I bid you, Farewell!

